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FEEDBACK PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF SYNCHRONOUS ESP DISTANCE LEARNING IN A NON-LANGUAGE UNIVERSITY UNDER MARTIAL LAW IN UKRAINE

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The facts presented in the article indicate that the only possible form of mass education in Ukraine in war conditions is synchronous distance learning. An analysis of relevant modern foreign and domestic studies has shown that researchers consider feedback in the learning process as one of the central concepts in education, paying considerable attention to the characteristics of feedback forms, including the formative one, but the ways of its implementation in the process of synchronous distance learning have not been sufficiently studied. The authors' study proves that in synchronous distance learning of ESP on the ZOOM platform, formative feedback is possible under certain technical and didactic conditions. Formative feedback is possible and should occur at all stages of the ESP session. The article describes the practices of organizing effective formative feedback used by the authors of the study while teaching all types of speech activity: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Compared to offline learning, synchronous distance learning significantly increases the share of formative peer feedback, which contributes not only to the activation of the educational process, but also to the socialization of students. The study focuses on the fact that feedback is a two-way process that affects the performance of both the recipient of feedback and the one who gives it. The results of the study can be useful for both university foreign language teachers and school teachers.

Key words: *formative feedback; synchronous distance learning; students; teachers; University; ESP*

Наведені у статті факти свідчать про те, що єдиною можливою формою масового навчання в Україні в умовах війни є синхронне дистанційне навчання. Аналіз релевантних сучасних зарубіжних та вітчизняних досліджень показав, що дослідники розглядають зворотний зв'язок в освітньому процесі як одне із центральних понять в освіті, приділяють значну увагу характеристиці форм зворотного зв'язку, в тому числі й формувального, проте способи його реалізації в процесі синхронного дистанційного навчання майже зовсім не досліджені. Проведене авторами дослідження доводить, що при синхронному дистанційному навчанні ESP на платформі ZOOM формувальний зворотний зв'язок можливий за наявності певних техніко - дидактичних умов. Формувальний зворотний зв'язок можливий і має відбуватися на всіх етапах заняття ESP. У статті описані практики

організації ефективного формувального зворотного зв'язку, які застосовуються авторами дослідження під час навчання усіх видів мовленнєвої діяльності: аудіювання, усного мовлення, читання та письма. Порівняно з оффлайн навчанням, при синхронному дистанційному навчанні значно збільшується частка формувального зворотного зв'язку від одногрупників, що сприяє не тільки активізації навчального процесу, але й соціалізації студентів. Дослідження акцентує увагу на тому, що зворотний зв'язок - це процес двосторонній, який впливає на результати діяльності як того, хто отримує зворотний зв'язок, так і того, хто його дає. Результати дослідження можуть бути корисним для викладачів іноземних мов університетів та шкільних вчителів.

Ключові слова: формувальний зворотний зв'язок; синхронне дистанційне навчання; студенти; викладачі; університет; ESP.

Abbreviation: ESP-English for Special Purpose

Introduction. University disruptions due to war are having persistent negative effects on learning because they impact all elements of a student's opportunity to learn. As a result of the horrendous military actions perpetrated by the Russian aggressors not only on the front lines, but also against civilians and children, the traditional Ukrainian educational system has suffered significant losses in material and human resources. Ukrainians have had to resort to distance learning again, and perhaps one of the biggest challenges has been the attempt to simultaneously introduce distance learning throughout the country. In most regions of Ukraine, as of today, distance learning is the only possible form of providing mass educational services under conditions of blackouts, constant air raid sirens, rocket attacks, shelling, lack of water supply and central heating.

According to the statistical analysis of the forms of organization of training in higher educational institutions, carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (Shkarlet, S. et al, 2022, p.185) in 2022, as of March 15, distance learning was introduced in 54 out of 289 higher educational institutions of Ukraine, and two weeks later, by March 29, their number increased to 81.

Distance learning during Covid-19 restrictions differs significantly from distance learning under martial law. There are air raid sirens in most Ukrainian regions every day (or even multiple times a day in many of them), during which students and professors have to take shelter. This can directly affect the organization of the education process and interrupt it. As a result of this, the time for learning is reduced, students' motivation drops sharply, the psychological state of the participants in the educational process worsens and numerous technical problems arise, etc. One of the most difficult problems in such conditions is the organization of feedback from students, without which an effective learning process for teaching ESP is simply impossible. It may be useful to collect data and develop recommendations at the national level on the organization of the education process under the current circumstances of war.

Strashko, V. (2022), director of the Ukrainian Distance School Unicorn, referring to the online school that existed in Ukraine during the COVID-19 quarantine restrictions, in which high school students were taught by watching video lessons recorded by the country's best teachers, notes that the Ukrainian online school is certainly interesting, but no one has yet been educated by watching the videos themselves. The necessary system should consist of four components: platform, content, practice and feedback. As of today, only the second component is available, and even it is not fully developed.

Babak S., Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Education, Science and Innovation responding to a question from a journalist of the newspaper "Ukrayinska Pravda. Zhizn" (2022, November 10), said that he considers online lessons in real time to be the most effective format for distance learning in conditions of war. "In my opinion, the most effective way to learn remotely is through full-fledged real-time online communication, such as Zoom."

Thus, long - term distance learning should take place using a special online platform. To make students and teachers feel comfortable, it is important that such a platform be the only one for the entire university. This could be, for example, Google Classroom, Moodle, ZOOM, GOOGLE MEET or any other platform. Teachers, in turn, need to provide feedback to students and establish a grading system with clear criteria.

Literature review. Distance learning involves delivery of educational services to students who are not physically present at the educational institution. It is the fastest-growing segment of education, particularly in higher education and adult education.

Distance learning has many critics, both in scientific and pedagogical circles and in society at large. However, nowadays, under martial law, the attitude of both teachers and Ukrainian society to distance learning is changing for the better.

Distance learning can occur in two modes - asynchronous and synchronous. Asynchronous mode of distance learning means that teachers create their training video courses and electronic teaching complexes for them on the university educational platform MOODLE or on other platforms. The use of these resources is deferred in time, that is, students can use them at any time convenient for them.

The synchronous mode of study proved to be the most appropriate for distance learning of foreign languages, both for part-time students and for full-time students, because it allows for "real" interactive communication between the subjects of the educational process.

By distance learning in synchronous mode, we mean a special type of class-lesson learning, carried out by a teacher-facilitator with an assigned group of learners by holding regular interactive educational video conferences in real time on one of the cloud video platforms according to an approved schedule (Bratanych, O. et al, 2022) .

Both domestic and foreign educators and psychologists who devote their works to the issues of feedback in the educational process consider feedback in the educational process as one of the central concepts in education. Feedback in the distance learning process is a tool that involves students in the learning process, promoting responsibility for learning achievements and participation.

Decades of education research support the idea that greater learning comes from teaching less and providing more feedback. Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007) conceptualized feedback as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. A teacher or parent can provide corrective information, a peer can provide an alternative strategy, a book can provide information to clarify ideas, a parent can provide encouragement, and a learner can look up the answer to evaluate the correctness of a response. Feedback thus is a "consequence" of performance. Feedback is "the process in which learners make sense of information about their performance and use it to enhance the quality of their work or learning strategies" (Henderson et al., 2018, p.16).

Oliynyk, N. (2016, p. 216) notes that the interactive capabilities of electronic learning technologies make it possible to establish and even stimulate feedback, provide dialogue and constant support, which are impossible in most traditional education systems.

The main forms of feedback are summative and formative (based on the purpose of providing feedback). Lokshyna, O. (2009) understands formative assessment as an *interactive* assessment of student progress, which allows the teacher to identify students' needs and adapt the learning process accordingly.

Thus, it is feedback that is a means of obtaining information necessary for effective management of the synchronous distance learning process.

In terms of foreign language learning, Ludwig, J. (2022) uses the term "language feedback" and defines it as information provided to a student by an instructor or by another student that helps both that student and others in the classroom understand how well they are using the target language. It can be used to give a general indication of proficiency in any particular skill (speaking, writing, listening or reading) or it can be used to hone in on specific topics (grammar, vocabulary, etc.) that are new or are in need of review. Everything that happens in a language classroom, from spoken to non-spoken acts, can be used and understood as language feedback.

Espasa, A. et al (2022) focus on the importance of carrying out dialogical feedback practices in online education, as well as demonstrating why it is important to purposefully design feedback, at both instructional and institutional levels.

Solé, Cristina Rosi and Truman, Mike (2005, p. 72) argue that given the central role that feedback plays in the development of learner autonomy in general and, more specifically, in the area of distance learning in languages, it is surprising that the number of studies devoted to this topic is so small. Alshumaimmeri, S. N., & Alqarni, R. (2022, p 120), having carried out a profound literature analyses, argue that the majority of studies on computer-mediated feedback in L2-writing contexts have involved asynchronous feedback, with only the rare study devoted to TEF in synchronous and asynchronous modes. That's why they tried to fill this gap in the literature by examining how synchronous and asynchronous modes of TEF can complement each other.

Statement of the problem. Having studied the theoretical foundations of feedback in the context of distance learning, we found that most authors do not specify what kind of distance learning they are talking about - synchronous or asynchronous. The issue of organizing formative feedback in the context of synchronous distance ESP learning, technical and didactic conditions and possible practices for its implementation in the process of teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing has not been resolved to date. That is why the *purpose* of our study is: to formulate technical and didactic conditions, to analyze possible practices for organizing formative feedback in the process of teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing in the conditions of synchronous distance learning ESP and to determine their impact on student learning outcomes.

Methods. The issue of practical organization of feedback in a synchronous distance learning of ESP was studied on the basis of the State University of Economics and Technology in Kryvyi Rih with the first-year students of technical specialties in the field of metallurgy. It is worth mentioning, that technical specialties, unfortunately, are not very popular nowadays. But there is a need in the state for such specialists. That is why, in 2022-2023 academic year, students with a low entrance score or no results of the External Independent Assessment were admitted to these specialties. Virtually all of the students are male. At the beginning of the academic year, we administered an entrance language proficiency test and found that the vast majority of students were at the A1 level, namely: 32% scored up to 30 out of 100; 53% scored up to 65; and 15% scored up to 75. In addition, students revealed a very low level of motivation to learn a foreign language. Having received such feedback from the students, we decided to choose the elementary level of

the authentic textbook "Technical English" by Bonamy, D. (2008). The learning process was carried out remotely in synchronous mode on the ZOOM platform with a targeted use of feedback techniques for one semester. At the end of the semester, a special test was administered to determine the students' individual achievements in ESP learning.

Results and discussion. There are different cloud platforms for distance learning. The teacher needs to choose the platform that is most appropriate for the discipline he teaches. Very important from this point of view is the study of Kovalenko, A. (2021 p. 250), who identified the factors "that are important to consider when choosing a platform for distance learning of a foreign language: the interface, the ability to lay out a variety of materials, including audio and video recordings, presentations and links to useful Internet resources, automatic calculation of response statistics and monitoring learners activity".

In our opinion, the ZOOM platform is the most suitable for synchronous distance learning of a professional foreign language at a university. The ZOOM platform allows implementing all types of speech activities: speaking, reading, listening, and writing. In order to realize the potential didactic capabilities of ZOOM, today's foreign language teacher must be technically capable, technically competent, and methodologically ready (Bratanych, O. et al, 2022).

Würfel, N. (2018) Professor of Methodology and Didactics in Teaching German as a Foreign and Second Language at the Herder- Institute of Leipzig University, who studies the digitalization processes in the field of foreign language learning and teaching, argues that digitalization will not change anything on its own. It is not a (new) methodological approach, but it can only help to implement existing didactic micro- and macro-methods and, if necessary, propose new activities within those methods.

To date, all foreign language teachers at Ukrainian universities, who have used or are still using distance learning in synchronous mode, have approximately the same experience in this area. The authors of this article have sufficient practical experience of synchronous distance ESP learning to argue that the structure of the lesson, the sequence of stages, the methods of teaching a foreign language remain the same as in the conditions of the classical class-lesson system. Only some types of tasks, forms of control, the organization of the learning process, some activities and tools of the educational process as well as some ways of providing and receiving feedback undergo changes.

In pedagogical practice, feedback is a way of obtaining information about the correctness or degree of error in the actions of the subjects of the educational process. During training, it functions in two directions: towards the teacher and towards the student, and has a managerial and educational character, respectively. Feedback affects the pedagogical system as a whole and its components in particular. Changes occur under its influence. Synchronous ESP distance learning requires constant feedback, because foreign language learning must have a communicative focus. Communication is the exchange of information, and this is feedback. However, feedback is not only a means of communication in a distance environment, but also one of the main means of learning. We have identified several technical and didactic conditions for the organization of effective feedback in synchronous ESP distance learning.

- Students should join an online conference from a laptop, not a phone. The phone limits the ability to organize effective feedback.
- In an online conference environment, both teachers and students must enable the camera of their electronic device, which provides the "presence effect". Without the

enabled camera, there can be no meaningful feedback. (However, under martial law, students often do not enable the camera and the teacher cannot demand it because students are often in such circumstances that they do not want to show their appearance or housing).

- The teacher should make the right choice of an online learning platform that meets the requirements of the subject he or she teaches and provides interactivity of the learning process. To teach ESP, the online platform should provide opportunities to implement all kinds of speech activities: listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- The teacher must know and be able to implement the technical and didactic capabilities of the online platform he or she has chosen.
- The "share screen" option must be enabled. The electronic version of the textbook should be "posted" on the screen. There should be something constantly happening and changing on the textbook e-page to grab students' attention.

The role of feedback for students is critical in advancing language proficiency. Feedback should be provided in multiple forms including formative, summative and self-assessment. It should be specific, timely, nonverbal or verbal (spoken or written), and most importantly, relevant to learning goals and the targeted level of proficiency.

Formative feedback helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and focus on those skills that need improvement. The purpose of formative feedback is not just to summarize a student's learning in grades, but also to find ways to improve the effectiveness of the learning process, since feedback is a two-way process.

Let us consider several practices of organizing formative feedback in the conditions of synchronous ESP distance learning on the ZOOM platform by types of speech activities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Listening skills are developed through a variety of activities using audio texts set in work contexts. The listening activity requires students to carry out a practical task during or after listening, such as labeling a diagram, filling in a form or physically carrying out an instruction. Audio texts set in work contexts include voice mails, customer service calls, emergency phone calls, radio adverts, shouted warnings, spoken instructions and announcements. Before students are expected to carry out any listening activity, they are given some background information and often carry out a small preparatory task to set the context and encourage them to listen actively. The way of presenting a text for listening depends on the level of students' language proficiency and on what kind of feedback the teacher wants to organize - formative instantaneous (synchronous) or summative delayed in time (asynchronous). The following example shows the practice of organizing formative instantaneous (synchronous) feedback.

During or after listening to the audio text (depending on the type of written assignment to control understanding), instant formative feedback is organized, not only verbally but also in writing. Those students who joined the conference from their laptops, using the "comment - text" option, take turns performing (typing) the assignments directly in the textbook on the teacher's screen. By dividing the assignments into parts, two to three students can be involved in this work at the same time, with each of them doing their part of the assignment (typing) in different colors. Students, who can't type, those who joined the conference from a phone, comment, correct mistakes, suggest information

(peer feedback). If necessary, the teacher can use the "comment - text" option and type his/her answers in the textbook on the screen, correct mistakes with a pen of contrasting color, comment on the answers in a foreign language, using a limited lexical repertoire, the amount of these comments depends on the level of students' language proficiency. Besides, while keeping track of the work, the teacher gets instant feedback from the students and according to its results makes a managerial decision whether to play back the recording or its part once or twice more, where to stop the recording and play back a phrase or a word again, how long to pause so that students have time to fill in the necessary information.

Compared to offline listening training, distance listening training in synchronous mode has a number of advantages, namely: it is possible to organize both oral formative feedback and instant written formative feedback; listening training is easier to organize; the quality of the text playback is better.

Speaking is an important skill, whether the user is talking to colleagues at work, dealing effectively with customers seeking advice or technical support. Speaking tasks for technical students reflect real-world situations, such as buying equipment, checking on progress, reporting damaged goods, checking information, asking about English words, giving personal details, asking about specifications or giving warnings. Students are also guided towards giving short and simple talks based on diagrams.

Learning using the ZOOM platform does not impede the productive formation of ESP oral communicative skills by students, due to the organization of synchronous online communication between the teacher and students in a remote format, providing students with language practice, increasing their motivation by preparing for performing future professional duties in the virtual environment. Online classes are reminiscent of face-to-face classes, in a way that they are directed towards discussion, frontal work of the teacher with the group, and work in pairs and small groups in real time. There are six generally agreed upon types of corrective language feedback, where the goal is to help students be accurate in their active use of the language by giving them information as to what is correct (positive feedback) and what is not correct (negative feedback) in the target language: clarification requests, elicitation, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, recasting and repetition (Jonathan Ludwig, 2022). Oral communication, the different aspects of a student's oral performance may be evaluated by attention to fluency, accuracy and complexity. However, during spoken work less feedback should generally be given because any interruption could interrupt the flow of discourse output from the students.

In the process of synchronous ESP distance learning, there is a problem with providing feedback and assessment of oral monologue or dialogic speech of students who do not turn on the camera. The teacher cannot see whether the student is speaking or reading the text. In this case, the teacher may ask the student to record the statement on video and send it to him/her via Viber or Telegram. Sometimes such students ask for permission in the chat room to leave the conference and make a recording right during class and then show the video to the rest of the students, expecting a positive feedback from the teacher and/or students.

Reading is a key skill needed by technologists both in the training context and at work. The texts they have to process in real life can vary enormously in length, complexity and genre. Readers' purposes vary from in-depth understanding to following instructions

or searching for statistics. The reading texts in Technical English Course Book reflect real-life texts and purposes, and are all based on authentic sources. These sources include websites, FAQs, manuals, technical magazines, textbooks, troubleshooting guides, customer service guides, catalogues, user guides, reports and specification charts.

In the language organization system, the text is the highest level unit, below which there is a sentence. Learning to read offline is not very different from learning to read in a synchronous distance learning environment, but there are still some differences.

Pre-reading stage. It is a well known fact that better understanding occurs when students are engaged in activities that bridge their old knowledge with the new one. Labeled diagrams and photographs are liberally provided in Technical English Course Book to aid comprehension of technical data, and students are always given some background information or asked to think about a topic before they start reading, so that they are using the texts actively. For example they may be asked to label a diagram (in the textbook on the teacher's screen) of a device from their own knowledge before reading about the device and checking their labels. Scientists believe that students should read with ninety eight percent coverage of the Vocabulary in the text so that they can learn the remaining two percent guessing from the context.

At this stage, students work through new vocabulary for the text: they read the words, listen to them in audio recordings, translate them, etc. But there are unknown words in the text itself, different for each student and in different quantities. Students work with such vocabulary individually with the help of Google Translator, and not only translate, but also listen and individually practice their pronunciation, thus receiving computer-mediated feedback and exercising self-assessment. Organizing such feedback is not possible in offline learning environments.

While – reading stage. Corrective feedback can be given during the reading process. But if the teacher stops the student every time he or she reads a word incorrectly, instead of developing self-control skills in their reading, they will hope that the teacher will always correct their mistakes. You don't need to push students, you just give them time to notice their mistakes and encourage the development of an internal feedback system. In this case, it is better to write down students' reading errors and then send the feedback to the student's personal chat room. If the teacher gives oral feedback on the student's reading, he or she should give as much information as possible with as few words as possible.

After-reading stage. The texts use carefully controlled language and are accompanied by simple and practical tasks such as checking information, labeling a diagram, correcting details or completing a specification chart. The exercises performed at this stage are aimed at controlling text comprehension and developing oral speech skills. They involve the construction of students' oral statements based on the text and their own life experience. Oral or written performance of exercises in the textbook on the teacher's screen is accompanied by oral comments of the teacher and gives him/her information on the quality of the work with the text.

Writing skills are developed through a variety of tasks in realistic contexts, reflecting the range of text types which students might have to produce in a work context. Writing activities in a work context include filling in forms, comparing products for

purchases or tenders, writing instructions to go with diagrams, writing emails, producing safety posters, writing rules and procedures and completing incident reports. Activities in educational context include writing simple technical descriptions of devices and how they work.

There is a definite difference between feedback on writing in an offline learning environment and synchronous distance learning. Most feedback in offline learning concentrates on the finished product of writing (process description, instructions, exercises, or other type of written product), whereas in synchronous distance learning conditions feedback concentrates more on the writing process, which is difficult to trace in the conditions of a real audience. Feedback on the finished written product is given in the form of symbols (grammatical error, wrong word, wrong word order in the sentence, check mark, plus, minus, etc.) sometimes descriptive feedback on the finished product is added. Feedback on the writing process (formative) is predominantly verbal and includes a significant amount of peer feedback.

Written assignments can be done simultaneously by 2-3 students on the teacher's screen in the textbook or on the free screen space next to the textbook, depending on the type of task, under the guidance of the teacher who gives real-time formative feedback. Several students, having divided their screen, work in an electronic notebook, which is located on the students' laptop desktop; this is usually a Word document. Upon completion of the assignments, these students are provided with selective review feedback "done or not done", or teacher and peer corrective and descriptive feedback. This feedback is produced by passing the screen demonstration to the students one by one. Another way: 2-3 students complete the assignments on their own and, at the command of the teacher, send them to the chat at the same time. The chat opens on the teacher's screen and assignments are commented or corrected by classmates along with the teacher. This type of feedback is educational not only for the performers of the assignments, but also for those who comment on the results of this work. The teacher also receives feedback on the need to correct or not to correct the methodology or online strategy for teaching writing. A significant increase in the share of peer feedback contributes to the socialization of students, which is so lacking for first-year students in the conditions of synchronous distance learning.

In offline learning, non-verbal feedback (paralingual) is widely used: gestures, movements, facial expressions, etc. Scholars who have studied feedback in distance learning settings are almost unanimous in saying that non-verbal feedback is impossible in distance learning settings. It's hard to disagree with this. But it does exist, but in a different form. On the ZOOM platform, for example, these are "reactions": a yellow hand, emoticons, applause, fireworks, etc. The teacher and students just need to develop the habit of using them. The use of non-verbal feedback is very important when teaching ESP to students with a low level of speech skills (if possible and appropriate) in order to avoid excessive use of the native language in a foreign language class, especially at the initial stage of learning.

The testing administered at the end of the semester showed the effectiveness of the practices of organizing feedback on improving learning outcomes in the conditions of ESP synchronous distance learning compared to the results of the entrance test, namely: 15% of students scored up to 30 out of 100 (-17%); 63% scored up to 65 (+10%); 20% scored up to 75 (+5%); and 2% scored up to 92 (+2%).

Decisions on when to provide feedback, how much and what form of feedback to use, are based on feeling and sensing what students need and when. Teachers should establish a positive rapport with their students, so they always know that teachers are rather helping than criticizing them.

Conclusion. The only possible form of mass education in the university under martial law in Ukraine is synchronous distance learning, which requires a solution to the problem of organizing effective feedback. Feedback is one of the central concepts in education. The main forms of feedback are formative and summative. Feedback is a two-way process that affects the performance of both the recipient of the feedback and the one who gives it. Formative feedback should take place at all stages of ESP class in the conditions of synchronous distance learning on the ZOOM platform and may be provided by the teacher, peers, computer or be in the form of self-assessment. The technical and didactic conditions for the organization of formative feedback in ESP class in the conditions of synchronous distance learning are: the camera of each student's electronic device, providing the presence effect, should be enabled; students should log into the online conference from a laptop, not from the phone; the teacher must make the right choice of the online learning platform that meets the requirements of ESP learning; the teacher must know and be able to implement the didactic capabilities of the chosen online platform; the laptop option "share screen" should be enabled, the electronic version of the textbook should be "posted" on the teacher's screen to organize work on all kinds of speech activity. The analysis of practices of organizing formative feedback in the conditions of synchronous ESP distance learning on the ZOOM platform, applied by the authors of the study to the university students of technical specialties, showed their possibility and effectiveness in the process of teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing. The conducted research is not exhaustive and opens up opportunities for further study of the problem of involving auxiliary online tools for organizing formative and summative feedback in the conditions of synchronous ESP distance learning on the ZOOM platform.

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