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The use of interactive online games services to improve the quality of philology students' education

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Abstract. *Problem statement.* The modernization of higher education opens up new prospects for the use of digital technologies in teaching philological disciplines. The use of interactive online games services meets the requirements of educational programs for training students in pedagogical fields and the challenges of modern society. This article presents a study aimed at substantiating the effectiveness of using interactive online games services in the improvement of the quality of future philologists' training. *Methodology.* The study involved 162 students from the Sochi Institute (branch) of the RUDN University. They majored in 45.03.01 Philology (Teaching Philological Disciplines) and were pursuing a bachelor's degree. The integration of interactive online games services into the training of future philologists was implemented as part of the courses *Information and Communication Technologies in Foreign Language Teaching* and *Methodology of Teaching Russian as a Foreign Language*. The Pearson chi-square test was used during the statistical processing of the results. *Results.* The information activities of future philologists using the WordWall service are described in detail: group sorting, anagrams, sentence completion, pair matching, comparison, etc. To collaboratively construct semantic maps and classify verbs "in real time", the future philologists used digital whiteboards (Miro, Padlet); to create posters and reference materials, they used infographic services (Infogram, Piktochart). Students first consider the interactive online game service as a digital tool studied within the framework of the course *Information and Communication Technologies in Foreign Language Teaching*. Then, the future philologists use the service's functionality to implement (demonstrate) a methodology for teaching Russian as a foreign language. Statistically significant differences in the qualitative changes in student proficiency were identified ($\chi^2 = 6.402$; $p < 0.05$). *Conclusion.* The use of interactive online games services in teaching future philologists offers significant didactic potential for improving the quality of their training: the presentation of information in various forms, increased motivation and engagement, and the high interactivity. However, some drawbacks have been identified: a limited number of free templates, internet dependency, and the inability to download ready-made tasks.

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Применение интерактивных игровых онлайн-сервисов для повышения качества подготовки будущих филологов

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Аннотация. *Постановка проблемы.* Модернизация высшего образования открывает новые перспективы для использования цифровых технологий в преподавании филологических дисциплин. Применение интерактивных игровых онлайн-сервисов отвечает требованиям к образовательным программам подготовки студентов педагогических направлений и вызовам современного общества. *Цель* – обосновать эффективность использования интерактивных игровых онлайн-сервисов в обучении будущих филологов для повышения качества их подготовки. *Методология.* В исследовании приняли участие 162 студента Сочинского института (филиала) Российского университета дружбы народов, обучающиеся по направлению 45.03.01 «Филология» (профиль «Преподавание филологических дисциплин»). Интеграция интерактивных игровых онлайн-сервисов в обучение будущих филологов реализована в рамках изучения дисциплин «Информационно-коммуникационные технологии в обучении иностранному языку» и «Методика преподавания русского языка как иностранного». Для статистического анализа данных использовался критерий χ -квадрат Пирсона. *Результаты.* Подробно описана работа будущих филологов с ресурсами сервиса WordWall: групповая сортировка, анаграммы, завершение предложения, поиск пар, сравнение и т.д. Для совместного построения семантических карт и классификации глаголов «в реальном времени» будущие филологи использовали интерактивные доски (Miro, Padlet); для создания плакатов-памяток – сервисы инфографики (Infogram, Piktochart). Сначала студенты рассматривали интерактивный игровой онлайн-сервис как цифровое средство, изучаемое в рамках дисциплины «Информационно-коммуникационные технологии в обучении иностранному языку», затем применяли функциональные возможности сервиса для реализации (демонстрации) методики преподавания русского языка как иностранного. Определены

статистически достоверные различия в качественных изменениях, произошедших в уровне подготовки студентов ($\chi^2 = 6,402$; $p < 0,05$). **Заключение.** Применение интерактивных игровых онлайн-сервисов в обучении будущих филологов обладает значительным дидактическим потенциалом для повышения качества их подготовки: представление информации в различной форме, повышение мотивации и вовлеченности, интерактивный характер взаимодействия. Однако выявлены и недостатки работы с сервисами: ограниченное число бесплатных шаблонов, зависимость от сети Интернет, отсутствие возможности скачивать готовые приложения.

Ключевые слова: подготовка филологов, цифровые технологии, интерактивное взаимодействие, геймификация, русский язык как иностранный

Вклад авторов. С.Ю. Новоселова – концепция (формулирование идеи, целей и задач) и дизайн исследования. Т.В. Машарова – разработка методологии, создание модели исследования. Н.Н. Векуа – написание статьи, ее редактирование. Все авторы прочли и одобрили окончательную версию рукописи.

Заявление о конфликте интересов. Авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

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Problem statement. The use of interactive online games and interactive educational tools in higher education is a rapidly developing and promising area in global research and pedagogical practice. UNESCO experts convincingly note in their recommendations that digital games (in particular, their design and development activities) facilitate the acquisition of experience in social-emotional interaction, intercultural dialogue, game design, and the prevention of extremism.

The work of future philologists in the context of developing and maintaining intercultural dialogue is particularly important. This is because these specialists must possess profound knowledge of language, literature, and cultural studies, which must be supported by skills in effective intercultural communication, including in the digital educational environment.

In a theoretical study, E. Guseva, S. Shulezhkova, A. Mikhin examine the nature and specificity of digital competence as a component of the professional competence of philology students [1]. The author conclude that the work of a modern philologist involves a wide range of functional tasks and requires a creative approach, the development of a distinctive style, the ability to create various types of digital resources, self-analytical skills, and a constant desire for self-improvement.

According to H. Siswanto and Y. Astutik, the quality of a philologist's work depends, among other things, on the digital teaching tools used in philological activities [2]. V. V. Grinshkun and T. N. Suvorova identify specific aspects of teacher training in the context of the digital transformation of education [3]. For example, they explore and use a variety of digital services (including gaming-based ones).

The authors also note the importance of engaging future teachers in the design of their own digital educational products, their content, and their critical evaluation. T. Parshutkina and U. Turko highlight (and attribute didactic potential to) the following areas of future professional activity for philology students: working with digital texts, programming, communication in digital interactive environments, designing and creating media content, and expert evaluation of digital texts [4].

E. Zhindeeva, N. Belova, S. Kamilova, N. Karabanova, T. Utkina, N. Shvechkova describe and evaluate the state of the scientific development of the concept of “digital competence” in detail [5]. The authors’ findings are valuable for this study because the experimental work was conducted on translation specialists (bachelor’s degree students in philology). The researchers point out that the successful development of digital competence in future philologists is impossible without practical work in relevant virtual interactive environments. This applies both to studying the interface and capabilities of technologies and to creating their own digital didactic product.

K.A. Ocheretyany argues for the potential of using computer games as a teaching tool in a wide range of social and human sciences (including philology) [6]. This opportunity, according to the author, has emerged and gained ground because in today’s world, educators increasingly deal with phenomena, communicative practices, and evaluative acts conditioned by the challenges of digital reality. For example, the use of digital resources in a game format to explain theoretical concepts, reinforce material in an interactive game through drag-and-drop, and assign a grade (rating) as the result of a game-based competition.

E.V. Soboleva, T.N. Suvorova, T.V. Masharova, and E.P. Ivutina describe the real-world experience of how the use of digital text generation services in teaching philology students can improve their motivation, cognitive activity, and the quality of their training [7]. The authors emphasize that the effective use of text generation services in philological activities involves:

- 1) studying a wide range of available digital services for working with tag clouds, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each;
- 2) mastering the functionality of several of the analyzed resources;
- 3) completion of tasks by future specialists according to the instructions;
- 4) digital resources for use in future professional practice. However, as the authors rightly note in the conclusion, the effective use of digital services in philology activities requires the introduction of a number of specialized disciplines into the educational program. Such as a discipline focused on the use of new interactive technologies in the activities of a philology teacher.

An analysis of the above-mentioned studies reveals the need for further research into the use of interactive online games in the training of future philologists to improve the quality of education. This article presents a study aimed at substantiating the effectiveness of interactive online games in enhancing the quality of philological education.

Methodology. The interactive online games is considered in two contexts for the work of future philologists as a digital tool studied within the framework of the

course *Information and Communication Technologies in Foreign Language Teaching* and as an electronic educational resource for the implementation (demonstration) of methods for teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The pilot study was conducted at the Sochi Institute (branch) of the RUDN University (hereinafter referred to as the Sochi Institute). The program is 45.03.01 Philology (Teaching Philological Disciplines). The level of education is a bachelor's degree. The use of interactive online games in the training of future philologists is implemented as a part of the course *Methodology of Teaching Russian as a Foreign Language*. A total of 162 students were involved in the study, divided into two groups, each comprising a control and an experimental group of 81 students.

Digital whiteboards (Miro, Padlet) were used for collaboratively constructing semantic maps and classifying verbs in real time. Infographic services (Infogram, Piktochart) were used to create posters and reference materials, where the meaning of a prefix is conveyed through an icon and a vector.

Exercise builders (LearningApps, Wordwall) were indispensable for creating tasks such as “matching a diagram with a verb” or “plot a route on a map using the correct forms”.

Joyteka platform enabled collaborative work, quizzes, and crossword puzzles. The platform also proved useful for web quests.

The effectiveness of timeline tools (TimelineJS) was demonstrated for visualizing the sequence of actions (arrived → stayed → departed).

Word cloud generators (MonkeyLearn) were used by future philologists to group verbs into thematic clusters (transportation, speed, environment).

Students in the experimental group were examined in detail using the WordWall service¹: group sorting, anagrams, sentence completion, pair matching, and so on.

To test the effectiveness of using online game services in teaching future philologists to improve their training, a test based on the course curriculum was developed. Sample questions and the logic behind their construction are included in the study results. To determine the level of training of future philologists, the following levels were defined: high, medium, and low. The Pearson chi-square test was used for statistical data analysis.

Results and discussion. T. Sobchenko and V. Vorozhbit-Horbatiuk note that the relevance of the problem under study – improving the quality of training future philology teachers using digital interactive technologies with a game-based learning format is driven by dynamic changes in the digital society [8]. Their research methodology includes an analysis of the target, substantive, and procedural aspects of developing future philologists' digital competence. The authors actively used survey methods using Google Forms to support the implementation of educational programs in the specialty “Philology”. In their conclusions, T. Sobchenko and V. Vorozhbit-Horbatiuk reasonably conclude that to consciously integrate digital interactive technologies into their future professional activities, aspiring philologists need the following: clear motivation and awareness of the didactic potential of

¹ WordWall. Available from: <https://wordwall.net/ru> (accessed: 10.12.2025).

a particular digital resource; an understanding of the operating principles of the software; and the availability of free digital content with an interface in their native language. The authors note that promising avenue of the game-based application of digital technologies in the activities of philologists is a promising direction for further research.

N.I. Efimova and N.I. Morzhanaev analyze the meaning and significance of text in a computer game, specifically examining the philological aspect in detail [9]. The scholars substantiate the relevance of their research for a wide range of fields in philological science. N.I. Efimova and N.I. Morzhanaev emphasize the central role of literary language. They believe that the interface language of gaming software and related technical documentation deserves particular attention, particularly texts describing control features and system requirements. C. Debray explores the problem of forming a gaming community and developing communication skills in such chats [10].

M. Akbıyık and D. Koç conduct a study identifying the digital competency needs of students learning English as a foreign language in Turkish higher education [11]. To develop the sought-after digital competencies of future philologists, Ch. Elisavet, T. Mavropalias, M. Deligianni propose introducing a course (or module) into the relevant educational program that involves the creation of digital teaching materials and interactive assignments using game elements [12]. A. Kozak, L. Lavrynovych, S. Sukhareva, V. Iaruchy, and O. Iaruchy analyze the diversity of digital technologies currently used in teaching philological disciplines. The authors note the need for a multilingual interface (simple and convenient switching between local languages) [13].

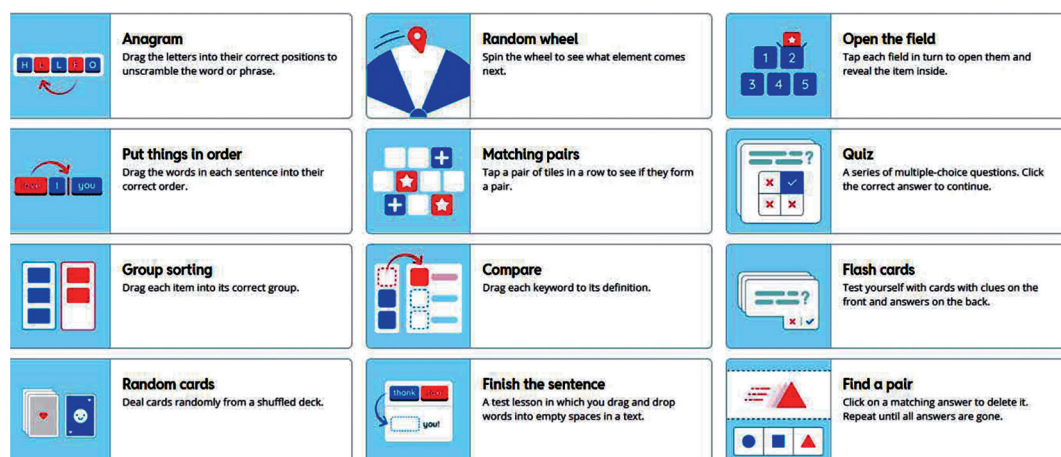
I. Varvaruk, I. Sakhnevych, N. Hasiuk, T. Muzika, and O. Lada explore innovative approaches that can significantly impact the quality of philological education [14]. Based on an analysis of case studies and a comparison of best practices, the authors identify the effectiveness of interactive teaching methods and tools, group work, and game-based interactions. Furthermore, I. Varvaruk, I. Sakhnevych, N. Hasiuk, T. Muzika, and O. Lada advocate the informed integration of student-developed digital applications into philological education [14]. H. Siswanto and Y. Astutik, using experimental data, demonstrate that using the Duolingo app allows philology teachers to effectively enhance students' vocabulary [2]. E.V. Soboleva, T.N. Suvorova, S.Yu. Novoselova, and T.V. Malova describe in detail the potential of using book trailer creation services to develop reading skills, the ability to interpret, formulate key ideas and concepts, and critical evaluation skills [15]. Consequently, using relevant digital applications requires teachers to possess a range of technical and methodological skills, such as developing and populating their own interactive information resources is crucial.

Taking into account the previously outlined areas of work (in the research methodology), a pilot project was conducted within an interactive online games. First, students were introduced to a wide range of online games and their potential for teaching Russian as a foreign language. They studied the interface and functionality. Then, as part of the methodology course, the teacher demonstrated

various examples of implementing different interactive gaming simulators. For example, for memorizing words, correlating terms and meanings, reviewing pronunciation, etc. And then, the students began designing and implementing their own didactic simulator in the aforementioned platform.

This section describes the workflow for philology students using the Wordwall service.

1. Exploring the service’s interface and functionality. The closest analogue to the familiar LearningApps is WordWall. These services operate on a similar principle, but there are some differences in functionality. These instructions explain how to register on the website and create your own lesson. To begin, click the “Register” button in the upper right corner. If you can’t find the button because the language in which this page was presented is unfamiliar, you can find a drop-down list in the same corner with a large number of languages into which this service is translated. The platform supports the Russian language interface. If you have a Google account, this can be done with just one click. If not, you will need to enter your email address and create a password. Figure shows the tools – the functionality of the interactive service.



Interface and functionality

Source: created by Svetlana Yu. Novoselova, Tatyana V. Masharova, Natalia N. Vekua.

2. Follow the instructions.

2.1. Open your browser and visit the WordWall website. Click “Login” in the top right corner of the website. If you already have an account, log in using your username and password. If you don’t have an account, click “Register for a free basic account”, enter your email address, create a strong password, confirm it, fill out all fields in the registration form, and click “Register”. Note that only 12 templates are available for free.

Set up your account: in the window that opens, answer the question “What best describes your role?” The “My Activities” tab will open. Click “Create your first activity now”. Next, the “Select a template” tab will open.

2.2. In “Standard Templates”, select the “Complete the Sentence” template.

In the “Enter Content” tab, create a title for the activity (Choose the correct Present Perfect (Simple) form in sentences). In the “Enter a sentence or short text” line, enter the text of your sentence with a gap.

Click the “Add missing text” button and enter the missing word/phrase (Have you ever had).

Click the “Add incorrect answer” button and enter the incorrect answer (Have you ever had). In the “Enter a sentence or short text” line, enter the text of your sentence with a gap (Yes, Two years ago). Click the “Add missing text” button and enter the missing word/phrase (I’ve broken my leg).

Click the “Add incorrect answer” button and enter the incorrect answer (I have break my leg). In the “Enter a sentence or short text” line, enter the text of your sentence with a gap (... your medicine yet).

Click the “Add missing text” button and enter the missing word/phrase (you haven’t taken). Click the “Add incorrect answer” button and enter the incorrect answer (you haven’t taken). Click the “Done” button. Your task is complete.

2.3. Go to the “Create Lesson” tab. Select the “Anagram” template. Enter “Colors” in the “Lesson Title”. Select “No Hints” mode. In the “Word” tab, enter “Red.” Click “Add Word” and enter three more words (Pink, Black, White), clicking “Add Word” each time. Click “Done”. Your task is complete!

2.4. Go to the “Create Lesson” tab. Select the “Tidy Up” template. Enter “Tidy Up Sentences” in the “Lesson Title”. In the “Sentences” tab, enter the sentence: “I love you”. Click the “Add Sentence” button and enter the following: “I have to go to school”. Repeat this step two more times, writing the following sentences: “I am 10 years old”; “I have two cats”. Click “Done”. Your task is complete.

3. Creating Your Own Interactive Game Applications.

Let’s look at two examples of game tasks developed by students, future philologists.

3.1. For example, one student decided to create a quiz based on M.M. Prishvin’s *Boys and Ducklings*. The student’s instructions are presented below:

To begin working on the templates, select “Quiz”. A window will open in which you must enter the lesson title, question, and answers. You can increase the number of answer options by clicking the “+ Add more answers” button. To add audio or an image, click the microphone or image icon in the answer field, respectively. After entering the answer options, mark the correct one: click the red cross next to the answer letter, and it changes to a green checkmark. To create the next question, click the “+ Add question” button. To move or delete a question, use the arrows and trash can icons to the right of the question.

Please fill in all fields according to the information below. Lesson Title: “M.M. Prishvin. About Children and Ducklings”.

Question 1. What was the name of the small wild duck’s breed? Answer options: Mallard; Teal; Mandarin.

Question 2. Why was the duck forced to build a nest so far from the water? Answer options: She got lost; in the spring, the lake overflowed, and there was no stable place for a nest; Hunters frightened her.

Question 3. What did the children throw at the ducklings when they saw them by the road? Answer options: Stones; Pine cones; Hats.

Question 4. How many ducklings did the mother have? Answer options: Four; Five; Seven.

Question 5. What did the narrator call the children who initially laughed at his parting with the ducklings? Answer options: Silly; Mischievous; Scoundrels.

Question 6. What did the narrator tell the children to do to correct the situation? Answer options: Feed the ducklings bread; Take the ducklings back to the nest; Return all the ducklings to their mother.

After completing all the questions, click the “Complete” button. It is a task you can test with your younger students. You can also change the visual style and view the leaderboard.

To create infographics to support the developed app, the student used Infogram.

3.2. A version of instructions written by another student for using the gaming service.

After logging in, click the “Create Lesson” button. A window with available exercise templates should open. Select the “Group Sorting” exercise. After selecting an exercise, the exercise editing page opens. In the “Lesson Title” input field, enter a name for your exercise (for example, “Perfective and Imperfective Verbs”).

Below are two blocks. Change their names (the first block is “Perfective Aspect”, the second block is “Imperfective Aspect”) by clicking the edit button (pencil icon) in each block.

Next, you need to add elements to each block. To do this, click the “Add Element” button in each block. Then, enter words in the input field (first block: read, write, listen; second block: listen, write, read).

Click the “Done” button. You will be redirected to the demonstration page for your exercise. Next, click the “Share” button. In the pop-up window, select the age group, subject, and topic of the simulator.

Then click the “Publish” button. A window will appear with a link to your simulator, which can be shared. To create infographics to support the developed application, the student used Piktochart.

Thus, future philologists not only studied interactive online game services (interface and functionality) but also created their own educational resources in digital format. Furthermore, they compiled instructions for them and applied them in practice. Discussion of the results took place using interactive whiteboards (Miro, Padlet).

The main goal of the experiment was to test the effective use of interactive online game services to improve the quality of training for future philologists.

During the preparatory stage, the authors of the study analyzed modern interactive technologies for teaching Russian as a foreign language. Based on the course syllabus, the authors designed a test. Its structure included 50 open-ended and 50 closed-ended questions. Examples of questions:

1. Which electronic dictionaries will be useful when studying Russian grammar?

2. When will you use PowerPoint? Answer options: when preparing a report on “Adjectives as a Part of Speech”, when preparing a presentation on “Pronouns as

a Part of Speech”, when writing a thesis, or when preparing a paper on “Adverbs as a Part of Speech”.

3. What do you understand by information technology?

4. When writing a paper on phraseology, you need to add pages. In which Word tab can you perform this function?

5. Formulate an assignment for students that would help reinforce the skill of seeing antonyms in text.

6. What keys do you use to start a search on any internet browser page?

7. Explore electronic educational resources and answer the question. Among the phraseological units given, the following expression is a quotation: “The thief’s cap is on fire (a Russian idiom meaning a guilty person reveals themselves); To twiddle one’s thumbs; Playing first fiddle; Manuscripts don’t burn”.

For the correct completion of an open-ended task, a student received 2 points; for a closed-ended task, 1 point.

Thus, based on the assessment results, a total score was assigned. The level of preparation was determined: low (0 to 55 points), medium (56 to 135 points), and high (136 to 150 points).

A control and an experimental group were formed.

In the second stage of the study, future philologists in the experimental group worked according to the plan described earlier.

Students in the control group also studied the course materials, but they were not involved in specially organized activities involving the online games. Let’s look at examples of the completed tasks.

1. Provide an example of a thematic image to illustrate “Who Lives Where”. Students could optionally use digital services to create infographics to support the developed app.

2. Explain a word through antonyms and antonymous constructions (hot – cold, tall – low, long – short, wide – narrow, interfere – help; lazy boy – hardworking boy).

3. Answer the question in text form: What do you see as the advantages of electronic dictionaries?

During the recording stage of the experiment, a test was administered again. The results are presented in Table below.

Evaluation of the use of interactive online games to improve the quality of training for future philologists

Level	Groups			
	Experimental, 81 students		Control, 81 students	
	before the experiment	after the experiment	before the experiment	after the experiment
High	10	17	10	11
Medium	33	44	34	35
Low	38	20	37	35

Source: compiled by Svetlana Yu. Novoselova, Tatyana V. Masharova, Natalia N. Vekua.

The calculations showed that $\chi^2_{\text{obs.1}} < \chi^2_{\text{crit.}}$ ($0.028 < 5.991$), and $\chi^2_{\text{obs.2}} > \chi^2_{\text{crit.}}$ ($6.402 > 5.991$). Therefore, the difference in proficiency levels between the experimental and control groups is statistically significant.

Conclusion. The use of interactive online games in training future philologists is both a pedagogical response to contemporary challenges (the digitalization and transformation of education) and an opportunity to diversify the forms, methods, and tools of teaching.

The described informational activities of future philologists using the WordWall service include, firstly, completing tasks according to instructions (group sorting, anagrams, sentence completion, pair matching, matching exercises, etc.). Secondly, the development of their game applications for the implementation (demonstration) of methods for teaching Russian as a foreign language. With the support of digital technologies, students understand, systematize, expand, and automate what they already possess, master written language, expand their vocabulary, and improve their verbal skills. To collaboratively construct semantic maps and classify verbs “in real time”, future philologists used digital whiteboards (Miro, Padlet); to create posters and reminders, they used infographic services (Infogram, Piktochart). Participants in the experiment noted the following didactic potential of interactive online games for improving the quality of their training: immersion, competition, and positive emotions; resources for independent language learning outside of class time; and overcoming language barriers in a virtual gaming environment for information interaction.

However, the experimental work also revealed some shortcomings: a limited number of free templates, the lack of an offline version, and the inability to download ready-made applications.

In general, interactive online games offer additional tools for learning Russian as a foreign language.

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