LINGUISTIC AND EXTRALINGUISTIC CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH FOOTWEAR TERMINOLOGY INTO ROMANIAN

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Received: October, 20, 2018 Accepted: November, 22, 2018

Abstract. The footwear terminology represents a great interest and challenge in translation, as world-famous brands, daily competing with each other, create almost monthly new models of footwear, thus, introducing new terminological designations for shoes and requiring their adequate translation using certain translation techniques. A large layer of English footwear specialized vocabulary is rendered into Romanian by calque, description and transcription in the absence of the proper equivalent in the target language. Subsequently, language replenishment with borrowed lexical units takes place, having a positive effect on the language vocabulary volume. However, the abundance of foreign words creates misunderstandings in the specialized communication of representatives of different target audiences. Moreover, in the modern intercultural specialized communication there appeared a tendency to use brands names adapted for the Romanian market instead of words denoting types of shoes.

Key words: terminology of accessories and fashion, polysemy, cross-cultural borrowing, eponymic terms, syntactic transformations, terminological equivalent.

CZU 811.111:685.3

Introduction

Phenomena and concepts of the modern world spread across all countries and continents at tremendous speed, despite state borders, level of development of state economy, languages and cultures. To make the intercultural communication faster and more comfortable languages of international communication are involved, their implication having a gradual character on the basis of modern means of their distribution.

Communication in any specific area of activity implies a special professional language, i.e. specialized terminology. Terminology of humanitarian sciences can be considered as a distinct and complex unit, since, from the point of view of the methodology of the scientific disciplines terms translation, their general criteria are superior to the particular ones. It means that it is possible to analyze the humanitarian field of knowledge as a whole (a single area), revealing the regularities of terms' formation, functioning and translation being inherent in the knowledge of its constituent areas.

Terminology exists in all national languages of the world. Terminological systems are very diverse: they are variable according to the terminological volume, diachronically full-formed and the ones still in the process of formation, properly conceptually organized and those permanently changing the criteria of concepts' distribution, having strictly

specific terms and those easily recognizable ones. The terminological system of footwear has a double sided character: on the one hand, its conceptual basis has been established in the XVI- XXth centuries and is still going on (it is diachronically formed branch of fashion industry); on the other hand, the development of intercultural relationships implies the necessity of adequate and proper rendering of footwear terminological/lexical units from one language (source language) into another (target language).

The present paper is devoted to the challenges in translation of English footwear terminology into Romanian. For the purpose of our research lexical units denoting various footwear concepts from official websites of different English and Romanian/Moldovan online shops were selected (e.g. https://www.fashos.com, www.famousfootwear.com/www.officeshoes.ro, www.deichmann.com, https://musette.ro/, www.garkony-shop.ro etc). The analysis covers more than 200 terminological units in the studied field of shoes fashion/accessories.

Results and Discussion

Speaking about the relationship between language and fashion, it is necessary to emphasize that both concepts represent symbolic systems, along with other similar symbolic systems, without which one cannot imagine the everyday life of modern human society - ornament, music, dance, architecture, etc. They are all symbols of beauty artificially created by man, while shoes represent another symbol, the one of human external/physical beauty. Here it is proper to quote the words of Christian Louboutin, the French fashion designer famous for its high-end stiletto footwear, affirming that shoes transform your body language and attitude; they lift you physically and emotionally [1].

Before proceeding to the detailed analysis of the topic, it is proper to have a brief historical overview on the development of the discussed industry, concepts and their terminological equivalents.

It is said the history of shoes has more than one millennium. In the modern world people cannot imagine their life without shoes, while several thousand years ago a person had to walk with bare feet and he didn't even think that their descendants who had lived 30,000 years ago would become the progenitors of shoes. Various reasons, mainly climatic ones (hot desert sand, thorny rocks, the violent cold of the Arctic etc) pushed our ancestors to create the first shoes. From archeological evidence, experts hypothesize that shoes were invented around in the Middle Paleolithic period approximately 40,000 years ago. No footwear has been found dating back to prehistoric times. The first shoes consisted of animal hides and furs wrapped around the foot.

The most reliable information about the kind of shoes worn by our ancestors dates back to the time of the existence of ancient Egypt and Greece. At that time, all sorts of sandals were popular, which were made in such a way that it was possible to distinguish representatives of different classes just looking at their shoes. In addition, men's and women's shoes differed in color, and the presence of embroidery and pearl jewelry indicated that such shoes were designed for special occasions [2].

To replace sandals Medieval Europe offered shoes with long, upturned noses often decorated with bells or bells, named bullets. The French king Philip IV even issued a special law, according to which the representatives of the noble families should wear only such types of shoes. In the XIV century, the length of the shoes demonstrated the nobility of their owner: the nose of shoes increased in length depending on the rank. To walk

comfortably and not to stumble, very long noses were tied with a string from the bent tip of the shoe to the leg.

According to the online Encyclopedia, in Europe's early Baroque period, women's and men's shoes were very similar, though fashions and materials differed among social classes. For common folk, heavy black leather heels were the norm, and for aristocrats, the same shape was crafted out of wood. In the 18th century, fabric shoes like the silk pair below were very much a la mode. In 1792, James Smith created a hierarchy of shoe sizes, that is, shoe sizes, which simplified both the production and choice of shoes by customers [3].

Up until 1850, shoes were made straight, meaning that there was no differentiation from left and right shoes. As the XX th century approached, shoemakers improved comfort by making foot-specific shoes. In the 20th century, the face of footwear changed drastically from decade to decade. During the Great Depression, black and brown shoes dominated the American market. Shortly after, Oxfords became a popular male choice and cork-soled, platform shoes grew popular among women. Women's shoes were now arched, sophisticated and made to highlight the foot [4].

Nowadays footwear fashion, as a social phenomenon, is spreading with the sunlight speed. It has recently become indeed one of the most global industries, and its professional terminology is international in nature, open to mutual enrichment and borrowing of new elements. It often happens when a famous film actress appears on the red carpet in a new image and style, and already the following day her dress and shoes will be copied by millions of people as Tracey Reese stated: "Shoes are the finishing touch on any outfit and is important to complete a look with the perfect pair" [5].

With the same high speed there is an exchange of terms, borrowed from one language to another or from one language to many other languages simultaneously. Beginning with the second half of the XXth century, the English language, namely its Anglo-American variant represents the source of borrowing, the so-called "borrowing room". The most important factor in borrowing words from other languages is the automatic transfer of words during the contact period with other languages. It is a natural phenomenon that the users of English (the Source Language) and Romanian (in our case – the Target Language) take and adopt the words from other languages unconsciously while interacting with other peoples [6]. According to V.M. Leychik, "the choice of the source language of borrowing is due to real historical practice" [7].

It is known that in the process of translation, the translator brings together two linguistic systems, one of which is explicit, stable and fixed, while another one is potential and adaptable. They represent the so-called point of departure of translation (Source Language). The task of the translator is to create the so-called point of arrival (Target Language). It is important for the translators to be familiar with the product they are translating and also with the tools they are using. The translation process is not a simple replacement of one word by another, but the rendering of concepts in another (target) language. First of all, the translator is required to analyze the original text, to assess the descriptive, affective and intellectual content of the determined translated units; he also needs to restore linguistically the situation described in the translated message, think about and evaluate its stylistic effect etc.

G.Kolshansky believes that when translating a context it is imperative to note that translation, in this case, is "a way of comparing semantic systems of languages or as a coordinate system of adequate semantic correspondences of different languages" [8]. In more complex cases, the translator applies synthesis - the construction of a new term that

expresses the same concept in the target language. Moreover, besides the above mentioned operations, the translator needs to choose one variant of translation. In some cases, he achieves this so quickly that he gets the impression of a sudden and simultaneous variant/action. In the process of reading in the source language, any kind of message is almost automatically generated in the target language; the translator can only check the source text again to make sure that none of the elements of the source language are omitted [9].

Therefore, the translation process is a complex one and being a translator assigns a responsible attitude towards the given translation. There are lots of difficulties which are met during translation and have various attributions, starting with the semantic dissimilarities and continuing with word order and morphological structure. Further we shall discuss some challenges in translation of footwear terminological units from English into Romanian.

Nowadays the footwear fashion industry (namely, the industry of accessories) is at the stage of active development, which causes the emerge of new highly specialized terms or, conversely, terms characterized by interdisciplinary polysemy may receive a new semantic value. Polysemy is known to be the ability of a word, phrase, or symbol to have several meanings. The multiple meanings of a term may be unconnected or unrelated (homonyms/ homophones are created). The procedures of polysemy expansion comprises both the old meaning's disappearance (amelioration is possible) and the emerge of the new one (co-existence of both meanings). In the English footwear terminology we met some interesting cases to be discussed further.

The first words to be discussed are lexical units which at first sight should have no connection to shoes. Such words as throat, tongue, heel in English and gît, limbă, călcâi in Romanian usually are used in the medical or general context referring to the parts of the human body. In the theory of shoes' construction these terms have their own meanings being applied in a very specialized context. For example, Romanian lexical unit călcâi is usually translated into English as heel, however, in the studied terminology the English term heel is usually rendered as toc, namely, the part of the sole that raises the rear of the shoe in relation to the front. In modern footwear industry there can be distinguished twenty five types of heels just for women footwear as cone heels (tocuri conice), chunky heel (toc mare în formă pătrată), platform heels (platforme), high heels (tocuri înalte) etc, for example: Slightly uncomfortable, but indispensable to the modern woman, available in countless shapes, colours and patterns, the heel shoes were and still are of great interest to both women and men. - Uşor incomozi, dar indispensabili pentru femeia modernă, disponibili în nenumărate forme, culori și modele, pantofii cu toc au fost și încă sunt de mare interes atât pentru femei, cât și pentru bărbați.

It is noteworthy to say that in the footwear terminology the upper part of the shoes referring to the heel is called a *backstay* which is also translated into Romanian *călcâi*: *shoes with integral insole and backstay - pantofi cu branţ și călcâi integral*.

Lexical unit *tongue* in common vocabulary and medical terminology refers to the fleshy muscular organ in the mouth of a mammal, used for tasting, licking, swallowing, and (in humans) articulating speech, while in the footwear construction tongue is a flexible piece of material that seat underneath the laces and a quarter of a shoe [10]. Modern footwear terminology includes several types of shoe tongues as *gusseted tongue* (*limbă cu clin*), *fold over tongue* (*limbă răsfrîntă*) *etc*, for example: *A kiltie shoe is a Scottish style that has*

a fringed tongue that folds over the upper and covers the laces. - Un pantof de tip Kilt, în stil scoțian, are o limbă externă care se îndoaie peste partea superioară și acoperă șireturile.

Another lexical unit of polysemantic character is *throat* denoting the passage from the mouth to the stomach or to the lungs, including the pharynx, esophagus, larynx and trachea; in footwear terminology it denotes the front of the vamp next to the toe cap [10]. In comparative aspect in general and medical vocabulary English throat is translated as *gât*, while in the studied terminology it got a terminologized equivalent *capută*: *Shop the latest collection of V throat shoe from the most popular stores - all in one place. - Procurați ultima colecție de pantofi cu capută în formă de litera V de la cele mai populare magazine- toate într-un singur loc.*

Speaking about translation of footwear specialized texts the greatest amounts of difficulties occur in translating the names of shoes including a proper noun in its English form. Translating personal names should not be assumed to be an easy issue as it can turn out to be very wearisome in practice and needs very insightful decision-making on the part of the translator within the translation process[11]. Albert Peter Vermes asserts that: "The translation of proper names has often been considered as a simple automatic process of transference from one language into another, due to the view that proper names are mere labels used to identify a person or a thing. Contrary to popular views, the translation of proper names is a non-trivial issue, closely related to the problem of the meaning of the proper name" [12].

Theo Hermans believes that there are at least four strategies for translation of names. He phrases them, as "they can be copied, i.e. reproduced in the target text exactly as they were in the source text. They can be transcribed, i.e. transliterated or adapted on the level of spelling, phonology, etc. A formally unrelated name can be substituted in the target text for any given name in the source text. And insofar as a name in a source text is enmeshed in the lexicon of that language and acquires 'meaning,' it can be translated" [13].

As our investigation showed there are just several techniques and methods of rendering English footwear eponymic terms into Romanian, namely, either to preserve its English form (partial assimilation of the lexical unit) or to give a descriptive translation of a given English term into Romanian. Sometimes there was a mixture of both techniques. It should be mentioned that the majority online shops preserve English variants in denotation of shoes, Romanian equivalents are met in exceptional cases.

While translating footwear terminolgy it was challenging to deal with terms like *Anabelle shoes, Chelsea boot, Derby Shoes, Mary Jane's shoes, Dory shoes, d'Orsay pumps* etc. These terms are characterized by the following features: the first element is a proper name, the term conditionally can be called an eponym; the external form of the term does not reflect its inner form, the qualifying element (the proper name) does not give any kind of marks for deciphering the semantic value of the term.

Thus the difference between, for example, *Oxford shoes* and *d'Orsay shoes/pump/* is not directly evident and in order to translate these terms one has to look for the words in the specialized sources. Thus, the *d'Orsay pump* are women's shoes in which the inside, or both sides, of the shoe is cut away, revealing the arch of the foot, its Romanian explanation being *pantofi d'Orsay* sunt pantofi înalți tăiat astfel să se vadă arcuirea tălpii piciorului, uneori există doar partea din fața și din spate a pantofului [14].

On translating the English term the d'Orsay (the word shoes is lacking) into Romanian one can find the qualified equivalent as pantofi d'Orsay: The d'Orsay exposes the curved

instep of the foot; a part of the foot that is typically covered. - Panofii D'Orsay expun arcul/partea curbată a/ piciorului; o parte a piciorului care este în mod obișnuit acoperită.

Oxford shoes are extremely popular among the customers around the world, being the most elegant type of men's shoes. According to the specialized sources Oxford shoes are characterized by shoelace eyelets tabs that are attached under the vamp, a feature termed "closed lacing" [41]. Romanian specialized sources are a bit reserved with the definition "pantofi înspirați de cei masculini, se închid cu șireturi pe capută, pot avea tocuri sau talpă plată" [14]. To note that this type of shoes have various denotations as *Richelieu shoes* in France or *Balmoral shoes* or *Bal – type* in the USA. That is a good example of synonymic chain of the studied concept – term representation: *Oxford shoes = Blamoral shoes = Bal-type shoes = Richelieu shoes*. In Romanian this type of shoes are rendered as pantofi Oxford or just oxford: The style of Oxford shoes is simple yet elegant; black is the number one choice for evening shoes, and patent leather for black tie and white tie. - Stilul pantofilor Oxford este simplu, dar elegant; negru este alegerea numărul unu pentru pantofi de seară, iar pielea lăcuită se potrivește /se asortează cu cravată neagră și albă.

Dori shoes is a rather new invention at the shoes market and, respectively, the term can be considered a neologism. In 2007, Dorimar Bonilla, a Las Vegas choreographer and dancer originally from Puerto Rico, first created these shoes. They were first used for performance at a cabaret show by "The Coquettes" at CatHouse, inside the Luxor Hotel and casino in Las Vegas. Dori shoes are dance shoes that combine the toe box of a pointe shoe with a dance heel approximately 3 inches (about 7.5 cm) in length [15]. In Romanian this type of shoes are called *pantofi sport Dory*, referring to dance as a sport, the semantic nuance absolutely lacking in English variant where the shoes are intended for special dance, being a combination of the ballet and the modern dance, but not a sport one [14]: *Dori shoes are also intended to help dancers to develop a higher level of technique in their performance because dancers are not limited to a specific style. - Pantofii Dori sunt, de asemenea, destinați să ajute dansatorii să dezvolte un nivel mai înalt de tehnică de interpretare, deoarece dansatorii nu se limitează la un anumit stil.*

Chopine shoes might seem to be connected with the name of Friedrich Chopin and one is totally wrong as a chopine is a type of women's platform shoe that was popular in the 15th- 17th centuries. Chopines were originally used as a patten, clog, or overshoe to protect the shoes and dress from mud and street soil [15]. In the Romanian language this type of shoes can be rendered as pantofi "Chopine" or using a descriptive technique pantofi cu toc tip platformă [14]. In our research it is the single case when the term is rendered in inverted commas. In the sentence below in the Romanian translation the first element / proper noun/ is used just once, in the second case it is omitted for the sake of the language beauty: Chopines were popularly worn in Venice by both courtesans and patrician women from ca. 1400–1700. Besides their practical uses, the height of the chopine became a symbolic reference to the cultural and social standing of the wearer. - Pantofii "Chopine" au fost purtați în mod obișnuit la Veneția atât de curtezane, cât și de femei patriciene aproximativ în perioada anilor 1400-1700. Pe lângă utilizarea lor practică, înălțimea pantofului a devenit o referință simbolică a stării culturale și sociale a purtătorului.

A special group of footwear terminology is denoting the so-called special purpose footwear, as footwear for dance, for health problems or other aims. The terminological unit diabetic shoes is sometimes referred to as extra depth, therapeutic shoes or Sugar Shoes, thus forming a synonymic chain. They represent specially designed shoes, or shoe inserts, intended to reduce the risk of skin breakdown in diabetics with pre-existing foot disease

[16]. In Romanian they are known as pantofi /încălţăminte / pentru diabetici or încalţăminte pentru persoane cu diabet; therapeutic shoes are translated as pantofi /încălţăminte ortopedică, pantofi medicinali, for example: Drew Shoe is the premier manufacturer of medical shoes, specializing in orthopedic shoes, diabetic shoes, and other types of footwear designed to alleviate health problems. - Compania Drew Shoe este producătorul principal de încălţăminte medicală, specializată în încălţăminte ortopedică, pantofi diabetici și alte tipuri de încălţăminte destinată ameliorării problemelor de sănătate.

In the group of special purpose shoes one can meet another terminological unit *elevator shoes*, which are shoes that have thickened sections of the insoles (known as shoe lifts) under the heels to make the wearer appear taller, or "elevate" them as the name suggests. They are designed to make a person taller, the height might alter from between six and thirteen centimeters. In Romanian *elevator shoes* are translated as *pantofi cu creștere în înalțime*, in some online shops they indicate the number of cm the person will increase his height (*pantofi cu creștere în înalțime de 8 cm US 7 – EU 39*) [14]: *Elevator shoes, like the platform shoe's heel, can be made from different soles like plastic, wood, or rubber.- Pantofii cu creștere în înălțime, ca și tocul de încălțăminte, pot fi fabricați cu tălpi diferite, cum ar fi plasticul, lemnul sau cauciucul.*

Footwear for dancers as other representative terminological units denote special purpose shoes. Such types of lexical units usually consist of two components, the first one compulsory indicating the type of dance: pointe shoes (pantofi de balet le point), ballet shoes (pantofi de balet), jazz shoes (pantofi de dans jazz), tango shoes (pantofi de tango), flamenco shoes (pantofi de flamenco), ballroom shoes (pantofi pentru dansuri de bal), dances sneakers (adidașii de dans), tap-shoes (pantofi de dans step) etc. In Romanian equivalents the word dans is followed by the preposition of purpose pentru or de. Therefore, a two-component English term is rendered by a three – four component Romanian term, for example: Jazz shoes typically have a two- part rubberized sole (also called split-sole) to provide both flexibility and traction, and a short heel. - Pantofii pentru dansul jazz au de regulă o talpă din cauciuc cu două părți (numită și talpă separată) pentru a oferi atât flexibilitate, cât și tracțiune și un toc scurt.

Another example deals with the lexical units safety-shoes/ steel-toe shoes/ steel-toe boot/ safety boot/ steel-capped boot representing durable boots or shoes that have a protective reinforcement in the toe which protects the foot from falling objects or compression, usually combined with a mid sole plate to protect against punctures from below [16]. In Romanian they have such types of equivalents as încălțăminte de protecție / pantofi, saboți, ghete, bocanci, sandale de protecție, for example: Noi vă punem la dispoziție o gamă variată de încălțăminte de protecție, de la cizme și bocanci de protecție, până la saboți sau sandale de protecție, cu niveluri diferite de protecție a piciorului. Cu bombeu sau fără, cu lamelă antiperforație sau talpă antialunecare, încălțămintea de protecție potrivită asigura confortul și protecția pe toată durata zilei, în fiecare zi. - We offer a wide range of safety shoes, from boots and safety booties to sabots or safety sandals, with different levels of foot protection. With or without a toe-cap, with anti-perforation toe-cap or anti-slip soles, the right safety footwear ensures comfort and protection throughout the day, every day.

One more interesting example is represented by the Romanian term *adidași* (also known as *pantofi sport damă*) which in English has several variants: *athletic shoes, fitness, gym shoes, work out shoes, running shoes* and *sneakers*. All of them are shoes primarily designed for sports or other forms of physical exercise, the difference being in their use. *Athletic shoes, fitness, gym shoes, work out shoes, running shoes* are used for going in for

various types of sport, while *sneakers* are now often worn for everyday wear and dancing, for example: *Buy the best ladies gym shoes from top brands like Nike, Adidas, Puma, New Balance, Under Armour, Asics and more. - Procurați cei mai buni adidași pentru femei de la cele mai bune brand-uri precum Nike, Adidas, Puma, New Balance, Under Armour, Asics și altele.*

At the grammatical level, a translator is expected to have a thorough knowledge of the grammatical rules of the target language. In fact, a translator does not have to know the grammar of the language for just the sake of it, he should be well versed in comparative grammar of the two languages involved in translation and the similarities and dissimilarities in them [17].

Further we shall analyze the cases where various grammar aspects were involved in the process of translation of English footwear terminology into Romanian:

- a) Modal verb will. In English grammar will (as a modal or auxiliary verb) is particularly versatile, having several different functions and meanings. It is used to form future tenses, to express willingness or ability, to make requests or offers, to complete conditional sentences, to express likelihood in the immediate present, or to issue commands. In the following sentence the use of will in the syntagm will avoid expresses a modal nuance of recommendation and obligation. Its Romanian equivalent is se va feri under the meaning of must /trebuie de evitat: The face of the shoe will avoid strong kicks or stinging. Faţa/bombeul/ încălţămintei se va feri de lovituri puternice sau înţepături.
- *b)* Syntactical Structure of the Syntagm. English word order is known to strict and not very flexible. This means that the order of words in the English sentences or utterances rarely changes.

The morphologic formula of the English three member compound term *moccasin-inspired* shoes is Noun + Participle II + Noun, while translated into Romanian it changes the syntactical order of its components: Noun + Adjective + preposition + Noun: The loafers are moccasin-inspired shoes that are most recognizable for being a slip-on style.- Loaferii sunt pantofi inspirați de la mocasini, sunt cei mai populari pantofi ai stilului slip-on.

Analyzing the English term casual house slippers and its Romanian equivalent papuci de casă obișnuiți we find out that there occurred the change of word order and the introduction of additional element in the Romanian structure of the terminological unit: English Adjective + Noun+ Noun equals to Romanian Noun+ preposition (de) +Noun + Adjective: The loafer was originally intended as a casual house slippers made for King George VI of England. - Loaferii initial au fost meniți /utilizați de Regele George al VI al Anglei în calitate de papuci de casă obișnuiți.

Some catching changes in the structure can be seen in the English terminological unit *hiking boots*, which has the formula Participle I + Noun. Its Romanian equivalent is *bocanci/ghete de drumeție* under the formula Noun +preposition +Noun: *Hiking boots are constructed to provide comfort for walking over rough terrains*.

Bocancii de drumeție sunt elaborați pentru a oferi confort în timpul plimbărilor pe terenuri aspre.

Thus, the nature of the grammatical differences between a pair of languages varies from language to language. A comparative and contrastive analysis of the grammars of two languages, is essential before a translators ventures to take up the job of translating.

These grammatical differences pose problems to the translator as it not only involves analysis of the differences but also finding accurate or proper and approximate correspondences in the target language, for effective transfer of the message [17].

Conclusion

English footwear terminology brings an image of a very complicated and mysterious system to which the uninitiated have but limited access. Those who have daily exposure to this fascinating system of specialized communication are usually unaware that they have acquired a different language. The terminology of footwear represents a special metalanguage as a variety of the general language, its terminological vocabulary being purely specialized or usual. A lot of terms tend to standartization, terminologization and determinologization.

Among the challenges the translator of footwear terminology has to face one must mention the variability of the standard official equivalents for English terminological units denoting footwear and their Romanian counterparts, or better to say lack of them, as there is no officially approved modern English-Romanian footwear terminology glossary. Another challenge in translation of the studied specialized language was represented by the source text quality. Footwear terminological discourse is very expressive in order to make the customer buy the product, but it also makes the work of the translator harder. So it is very important the original information in the source language to be clearly perceived and rendered. Any wrong choice of the word of behalf of the translator, any mistake could lead to serious translational misunderstandings and, in some cases, economical problems.

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