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# ENGLISH ANIMALISTIC SET PHRASES OF VERBAL SEMANTICS AND THEIR UKRAINIAN EQUIVALENTS

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Abstract. The article deals with the ways of rendering English animalistic components in verbal set phrases by their Ukrainian equivalents. It gives a contemporary definition of a phraseological unit. The approaches to scholastic analysis, proposed in the article are based on understanding phraseology as a semantic phenomenon, in which the comparison of its units in different languages is realized in establishing correlation of both their generalized figurative meaning and the inner form that motivates them, actively supporting a high connotative potential. The article also gives the definition of phrase formation as a doctrine, dealing with regular processes of arising and meaning development of phraseological units, applying diachronic and synchronic approaches to the investigation. The principles of A.V. Koonin's phraseological conception and his method of phraseological identification have been underlain in the study. In addition to this, the descriptive method and the analysis of dictionary definitions from several explanatory and phraseological dictionaries in both languages compared have been used for achieving higher objectivity in representing the results of the research. The whole corpus of the empirical material analysis demonstrated the existence of the following 5 phraseological animalistic subgroups: 1) animalistic phrases designating an extensive field of usual human actions and behaviour; 2) information about the state and feeling of a person; 3) the description of mutual relations among people; 4) time-indicating animalistic verbal phrases; 5) animalistic verbal phrases of quantitative action representation. Each of these groups has been analyzed in detail and exemplified with a number of phrases from both languages compared. The author draws a general conclusion that an animalistic component in English verbal phrase formation is more frequently used than in Ukrainian. As far as semantic peculiarities are concerned, it has been noted that the features of character that are ascribed to a certain group of people by animalistic components in both languages for the most part do not

Keywords: phrase, phraseology, phrase formation, phraseological identification, animalistic component.

**Problem statement.** The innovation of the article is in expounding the results of conducted analysis of English animalistic verbal set phrases and finding their Ukrainian equivalents in five proposed subgroups.

An idiomatic expression (set phrase, phraseologism, phraseological unit) is considered as an inseparable, set word combination, the complete generalized and figurative meaning of which has been formed on the basis of semantic transformation of the initial verbal complex-prototype.

The present-day approaches to philological studies are based on regarding a phrase as a semantic phenomenon in which the comparison of phraseological units from different languages are realized in the establishment of correlation of both generalized figurative meaning and the inner form that motivates them, actively supporting a high connotative potential. The inner phrase form is understanding the sign, underlying the nomination of a certain object, connected, as a rule, not with visible and vivid ideas but with elements of notional contents.

Analysis of the previous research. The interest to phrase studies in Ukrainian linguistics has significantly increased in recent years owing to a series of publications dealing with etymological, ethnolinguistic and linguoculturological approaches to the investigation of the most vivid and peculiar part of any language vocabulary [see, e.g.: Левченко 2007; Жуйкова 2007; Ужченко 2007; Краснобаєва-Чорна 2009; Савченко 2013; Венжинович 2018]. Though the searches in the field of phraseology have perceptibly grown of late,

issues concerning comparative analysis of English animalistic verbal set phrases and their Ukrainian equivalents have not been under consideration so far. Therefore the article intends to fill in this gap and suggest lexicographical solutions while translating the above mentioned widespread group of phrases from English into Ukrainian.

The material for illustration has been extracted from a number of both parallel and solely English explanatory dictionaries [see the List of Literature and Lexicographic Sources used at the end of the article].

**Research aim.** The article intends to fill the above mentioned gap and suggest lexicographical solutions while translating mentioned widespread group of phrases from English into Ukrainian.

Reaching the aim is based on performing the following tasks: 1) acquaintance with the state of the present-day phrase studies; 2) finding the gap in phrase-research; 3) filling in the gap by analyzing English animalistic set phrases and their Ukrainian equivalents; 4) summing up the results achieved.

The authors use a descriptive **method**, method of phraseological identification. In addition, the **method** of analysis of dictionary definitions was used in their study.

**Material description.** Phrase formation is a branch of linguistics learning regular processes of arising and semantic development of phraseological units in which diachronic and synchronic aspects of research are combined. The task of the diachronic phrase formation analysis is, above all, in revealing the basis of concrete material, underlying a certain type of phraseo-

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logical units and defining the processes that come into being. Among them the elucidation of the linguistic prototype status of phrases is especially singled out, enabling the revealing and description of language specificity of those genetic primary sources, which according to Yu.P. Solodub's story, «nourish phraseology, form rich connotative possibilities of phraseological meaning» [Солодуб 1996, р. 67]. Prototypes are imparted with a number of specific features, therefore it is important not only to define their linguistic status, but also give them a many-sided description based on analyzing both closely and distantly related languages.

For accomplishing tasks indicated in the article, it is necessary to consider basic ways of phraseological nomination, which include phraseologization (primary and secondary) covering both semantic derivation and allusion as a rhetorical method of hinting at a generally accepted historical, literary or everyday occurrences. These ways are singled out depending on the primary research material, underlying the study of each phraseological unit.

The phraseological stock of any language is the system that may be represented as the totality of units and relations among them. These units like words are imparted with the following general semantic categories as variability, polysemanticity, synonymy and antonymy. The study of the phraseological system is important not only for singling out characteristic features of their components, but also for studying specificity of different language systems. This is the *relevance* of the article under consideration.

The principles of phraseological conception, proposed by A.V. Koonin, and his *method of phraseological identification* have formed the basis for writing the article. Applying this method enables revealing phraseological features of any word combination on the basis of the following fundamental indices: a) full or partial reinterpretation of the componental store; b) structural disintegration; c) fixation of the idiomatic stock; d) reproduction in a ready-made shape; e) open-endedness of the structure. These features make up phraseology as the choice or arrangement of words and phrases in the expression of ideas; manner or style of expression; the particular form of speech or diction which characterizes a writer, literary production, language, etc.

Phraseological fixation is considered in the article in the broad sense of the word as a complex property that covers all the aspects of the unit under study. It is the notion of fixation that is the basis of A.V. Koonin's phraseological theory, who demonstrated it as a complex phenomenon that is based on five microlevels. Amounting, they give a common index of a phraseological unit fixation: fixation of use; fixation at a structural and semantic level, expressed in a structural and semantic model of phrase formation; fixation of partially reinterpreted meaning; fixation of a lexical stock, which permits the substitution of phrase components only within the limits of phraseological variability; morphological fixation, being revealed in the availability of components with a zero of incomplete paradigm and syntactical fixation, linked with the fixation of word order in a phrase, the changes in which are

possible only within the limits of variability, structural synonymy and occasional transformations. The use of the method of phraseological identification not only does not exclude, but also envisages the of elements of other methods of linguistic research, e. g.: *descriptive, contextual, distributive, oppositional, complicative* and others [Koonin 1986, p. 40].

One more point of departure in A.V. Koonin's conception of phraseological identification is the principle of studying phrases in synchronic and diachronic aspects. A many-sided study of phraseology is impossible without applying these two approaches. Any semantic phrase study compels appealing in one way or another to the sources of these units. It is the complication of meaning inherent in them that stipulates the attraction of both diachronic and synchronic aspects, which need making them more precise.

The diachronic aspect of scholarship research envisages studying evolutionary changes, that have resulted in forming phrases on the basis of prototypical free word combinations. The essence of the diachronic research is reduced to the transition from considering individual facts and phenomena to finding common features among them and deducing general regularities underlying the typology of phraseformation. The task of the diachronic analysis is revealing the prototype of a phraseological unit - «the type of the material, forming the basis of phrase formation» [Гвоздарев 1977, р. 43], as well as elucidating the processes that have led to phrase formation. The use of the diachronic analysis also enables revealing the inner systemic links that influence the character of phrase formation. In the synchronic aspect the investigation is conducted on the basis of a certain totality of phraseological units, that have been consolidated in a language as a result of a durable use by a language community. A certain structure and semantic or figurative correlation are available among these units as elements of phraseological language system. Here not only inner systemic regularities but also outer correlation with reality must be taken into account.

The prevailing property of the semantic phrase structure is full or partial reinterpretation of meaning of a phraseological unit. A direct initial meaning always precedes arising a figurative idiomatic one. Reinterpretation comes into being as an occasional semantic transformation of the prototype of the future phrase as it is still at its potential stage and is not a language unit. Hence, the formation of meaning of phraseological units occurs in the process of reinterpretation of the "previous" (initial) meaning, when a full or partial transformation of meaning of phrase prototype occurs, caused by semantic displacement.

An important source of information about the meaning of both an individual word, and the whole phrase one may also obtain as a result of conducting the analysis of definitions from explanatory and phraseological dictionaries. The use of not only one but several dictionaries as informants enables eliminating drawbacks in the interpretation of meanings occurring in some lexicographical sources.

The analysis of a considerable group of animalistic phrases convincingly proves that it forms proces-

sual set expressions, that is those, in which a verb is the main component. At the same time it has been indicated, that every processual phrase including a verbal component, was not always imparted with processual semantics [see, e. g., Лебединская 1966, p. 33]. Therefore we refer to processual phrases those, which nominate actions, states or relations, available in reality in the following animalistic groups:

- 1) designation of a wide sphere of human actions and behavior;
- 2) information about the state and feeling of a person;
  - 3) the description of relations among people;
  - 4) Time-indicating relations;
  - 5) the quantitative representation of the action.
- 1. Animalistic Phrases Designating Human Action and Behaviour

Phrases designating human actions and behaviour are semantically diverse. This semantic diversity is characteristic of both English and Ukrainian animalistic phrases, in which analogy is found with doing something wrong by different living beings: animals, beasts, birds, insects, reptiles, etc., e. g., to make a monkey of oneself - 'блазнювати': to play the ape - 'мавпувати, передражнювати'; to put one into one's hood (cap) -'виставити кого-небудь дурнем'; to lead apes in hell - 'померти старою дівкою'; to make somebody one's ape – 'обдурити кого-небудь'; to wash an ass's head (ears) - 'займатися безнадійною справою'; to make an ass of oneself - 'ставити себе в дурне становище'; to play (act) the ass – 'клеїти дурня'; to give somebody the bird – 'освистати кого-небудь'; to keep the bird in one's bosom - 'зберігати вірність'; to milk the bull -'даремно старатися' і т. ін.

Besides the actions of mainly negative colouring animalistic verbal phrases may also express positive and rational senses in their functioning, e. g. chasing a vigilant hawk is reflected in a phrase to watch someone like a hawk — 'уважно спостерігати'; to help a lame dog over a stile — 'допомогти кому-небудь у біді'; to stay until the last dog is hung — 'залишатися до переможного кінця'; to call off the dogs — 'змінити на приємну тему розмови'; to hunt down the fox — 'вивести кого-небудь на чисту воду'; to stand another hare — 'змінити тему, розпочати розгляд іншого питання' і т. ін.

The availability of rational actions and skills to orient oneself in the world around is implied in the following correlations: to know a hawk from a handsaw—'вміти відрізняти чорне від білого'; to squirrel away—'відкладати на потім', 'запасатися на зиму', тобто здійснювати раціональні дії, спрямовані на забезпечення подальшого життя людини; to shoot at a pigeon and kill a crow—'маскувати свою справжню мету'; to smell a rat—'підозрювати щось недобре'; to separate the sheep from the goats—'відокремлювати важливе від другорядного'; to keep the wolf from the door—'боротися із загрозливими злиднями, зубожінням' і т. ін.

The deprivation of normal intellectual behaviour is witnessed be the use of the following animalistic phrases: to go bats – 'сходити з розуму'; to have rats

in the attic — 'бути не при своєму розумі'; to act (play) the goat (the giddy goat) 'вести себе по-дурному, пустувати'; to choke one's goose — 'занапастити себе, викопати самому собі яму (могилу)'; to have one's head full of bees — 'носитися з нездійсненними планами та ідеями' і т. ін.

Some phrases denoting speech activities in which animal images are figured, have been formed on folk, literary or biblical basis, e. g. to cry wolf – 'піднімати фальшиву тривогу' (here an episode from a tale has been used about a boy, who cried: "Wolves!, Wolves!" while, in fact there were no wolves); to see a wolf -'втратити дар мовлення'; to let the cat out of the bag - 'видати секрет'; sell your ass - 'перестаньте говорити дурниці'; to foul one's own nest – 'виносити сміття з хати'; can the leopard change his spots? -'чи може людина змінити свою природу?'; to cast pearls before swine - 'кидати перли перед свинями'; the dog returns to his vomit – 'людина продовжує грішити'; it is easier for a camel to go (pass) through the eye of a needle, than... – 'легше верблюду пройти через вушко голки, ніж...'; strain at a gnat and swallow a camel - 'піклуватися про дріб'язкові речі, виявляючи неуважність до важливих'; the worm that dies not – 'вічно, безконечно'; worship the golden calf - 'поклонятися золотому теляті (багатству, грошам)' та ін.

Besides that, in animalistic, phrases a human action is linked with a person's attitude towards denoted animalistic creature. It is well-known, that an ass is used by a human being in husbandry, and this fact is expressed in the phrase to do the donkey work— 'виконувати нудну, невдячну роботу'; jest with an ass and he will flap you in the face with his tail— 'iз дурнями жартувати небезпечно'; to make an ass of oneself— 'ставити себе в дурне становище'; all asses wag their ears— 'дурням властиво приймати глибокодумний вигляд'; asses as well as pitchers have ears— 'малі діти чують багато зайвого'; honey is not for the ass's mouth— 'розбиратися як свиня в апельсинах'; till the ass ascends the ladder— 'коли рак на горі свисне'.

There is also a special microgroup consisting of phrases implying cessation of any activities, process or behavior, e. g.: never bray at an ass — 'не зв'язуйся з дурнем'; sell your ass — 'перестаньте говорити дурниці'; to show the bull-horn — 'учинити опір'; to chicken out (of doing something) — 'вийти з гри, що грозить неприємностями, поступитися'; that cock won't fight! — 'цей номер не пройде'; to blow off one's — 'відмовитися від здійснення задуманого'; to cast (send or throw) to the dogs — 'викинути через непридатність, відмовитися, зовсім відкинути, викинути на вітер'; to go to the dogs — 'розорятися, піти прахом'; to ride a horse to a standstill — 'загнати коня' і т. ін.

2. Animalistic Phrases Designating Status and Feeling of a Person

Among the phrases of this subgroup two microgroups are singled out: a) phrases designating manifestation of a person's status and b) phrases rendering moral and psychological definiteness of a speaker.

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Phrases designating manifestation of the physical status of a person include those that render human reaction to fear, cold, agitation, suddenness, e. g.: to say an ape's paternoster — 'скреготіти зубами від страху'; a hungry bear does not dance — 'голодному не до розваг'; birds of a feather flock together — to say an ape's paternoster — 'скреготіти зубами від страху'; a hungry bear does not dance — 'голодному не до розваг'; every bird likes its own nest — 'кожна лисиця свій хвостик хвалить'; birds of a feather flock together — 'рибак рибака бачить здалека'; God builds a nest for the homeless bird — 'Бог дасть житло для бідних'; early bird gets the worm — 'хто рано встає, тому Бог дає'; a bird may be known by its song — 'пізнати пана по халявах', etc.

There are the following common meanings in both languages compared, denoting physical state of a person:

being in a grave – to be food for worms (fishes) – 'годувати черв' яків' (риб);

hard drinking – to see snakes – 'напитися до чортиків';

being in a hopeless case – to have (hold) a wolf by the ears – 'бути в безвихідному становищі';

waking up at dawn – to be up with the lark – 'рано вставати';

being hungry – a hungry bear does not dance – 'голодному не до розваг';

being very busy - as busy as a bee - 'дуже зайнятий (як бджілка)';

ageing – an old bird – 'літня людина';

failure – have a bird in the bush – 'не домогтися чогось реального';

benefit – have a bird in the hand – 'отримати вигоду від чогось'.

The moral and psychological state of a human being is rendered in English and Ukrainian in the following phrase meanings:

abnormity – to have bats in one's belfry – 'бути ненормальним';

insanity – to go bats – 'сходити з розуму';

fury, rage – to take a bear by the tooth – 'лізти на рожен';

reconciliation – *to eat crow* – 'змиритися'; suspicion of something bad – *to smell a rat*, etc.

Besides, we see that in the languages compared both microgroups are filled with approximately equal number of phrases.

3. Animalistic Phrases Designating Relations Among People

This subgroup of phrases is widespread in English and Ukrainian. Semantically common among them are those denoting:

amorousness — to cast (make) sheep's eyes at somebody — 'заглядати закоханими очима на когонебудь';

quarrel – to lead a cat and dog life – 'сваритися'; subordination – to make a cat's pan of somebody – 'підпорядковувати кого-небудь';

hostility – to fight like Kilkenny cats – 'жорстоко

enmity – to put a cat among the pigeons – 'сіяти розбрат';

misfortune – as good as had the cow that struck herself with her own horn – 'дуже не пощастило';

self-sacrifice — to die dog for somebody — 'готовий померти за кого-небудь';

degradation – to die like a fog – 'померти як собака';

warning – beware of a silent dog and still water – 'тиха вода греблі рве';

inopportunity – to set the fox to keep the geese – 'поставити козла город стерегти';

exaggeration – all his geese are swans – 'він завжди перебільшує (переоцінює)';

impossibility – to set the tortoise to catch the hare – 'намагатися зробити неможливе';

risk – either to win the horse or lose the saddle – 'або пан, або пропав', etc.;

treason - to turn cat-in-pat - 'виявитися зрадником';

faxing – to play cat and mouse – 'грати в котамишки';

pressing down — to make a cat's pan of somebody — 'зробити кого-небудь своїм знаряддям';

begging – to put the bee on – 'випрошувати, жебракувати';

assistance – to help a lame dog over a stile – 'допомогти кому-небудь у біді (нещасті)';

needlessness – *to teach the dog to bark* – 'ломитися у відкриті ворота, не вчити вченого';

harming — to lead (give) someone a dog's life — 'розбити чиссь життя', 'довести до злиденного існування'; caddishness — to be a swine to somebody — 'ставитися по-хамськи до кого-небудь'; unscrupulousness — to run with the hare and hunt with, the hounds — 'вести подвійну гру'; flabbiness — to keep a dog and bark oneself — 'виконувати роботу свого підлеглого'.

As it is evident from the above given examples, the animalistic component in the phrases under analysis occurs almost always only in the English language. It testifies to the fact that English speakers are more attentive to the actions and behavior of animals in different situations, than Ukrainians. Therefore it is a more vivid inclination of Englishmen to metaphorization on the basis of phrase animalistic components, e. g., to show the elephant — 'ознайомити кого-небудь із життям великого міста'.

#### 4. Time Indicating Animalistic Phrases

Phrases of this microgroup refer directly or indirectly to the time appealing occurrence meant by the whole animalistic set phrase, e. g.: till the ass ascends the ladder - 'коли рак на горі свисне'; to sell the bear's skin before one has caught the bear – 'ділити шкуру невбитого ведмедя'; there are birds of this year in last year's nest - 'обставини змінилися; не те, що раніше'; early bird gets the worm – 'хто рано встає, тому Бог дає'; before the cat can lick her ear – 'коли рак на горі свисне'; the cat shuts its eyes when stealing – 'людям властиво заплющувати очі на свої грішки'; to be no chicken – 'не першої молодості'; to count one's chickens before they are hatched – 'курчат восени рахують'; till the cows come home - 'після дощику в четвер'; to stay until the last dog is hung – 'залишатися до переможного кінця'; the best fish

smell when they are three days old—'через певний час усе може погіршитися'; never fry fish till it's caught—'не діли шкуру невбитого ведмедя'; never offer to teach fish to swim—'не вчи вченого'; "almost" never kills a fly—'"майже" не дає конкретного уявлення';

a wise fox will never rob his neighbour's henroost— 'розумний сусід ніколи не обкрадатиме сусіда'; when the fox preaches, take care of your geese— 'коли багато говорять, прибережи своє майно'; first catch your hare, then cook him— 'курчат восени рахують'; to start a hare— 'розпочинати сварку'; to run before one's horse to market— 'випереджувати події, забігати вперед, ділити шкуру невбитого ведмедя'; never have the wolf to keep the sheep— 'ніколи не пускай козла в город'.

As we see from the above examples, the majority of phrases of this microgroup are often used with the following adverbs and propositions: *before*, *till*, *until*. The most frequently used is the adverb *never* in sentences implying advice.

It is interesting to note that the ironical attitude to the event that will never occur is easily felt in both languages compared, e. g.: before the cat can lick his ear (literally 'коли кішка оближе своє вухо'); when pigs fly (literally 'коли полетять свині'); when two Sundays meet together (literally 'коли зустрічаються дві неділі'), etc.

5. The Quantitative Representation of the Action The quantitative representation of the action in animalistic verbal phrases is, as a rule, accompanied with mentioning a great number of mites, e. g.: to have

one's head full of bees — 'бути фантазером'; a cat has nine lives — 'коти живучі'; to be alive with flies — 'кишіти мухами'; to be packed like herrings — 'бути втрамбованими як оселедці'; there are more ways of killing a dog than by hanging — 'є багато способів домогтися свого'; there are plenty more fish in the sea — 'у морі є багато чого (добра)'.

A smaller group of animalistic quantitative phrases is fixed among those, indicating a limited area or solitary instances of something, which include, e. g.: not to have enough room to swing a cat — 'яблуку ніде впасти'; to be the bird of wonder — 'єдиним у своєму роді, унікальним'; to be a lone bird — 'бути самітнім'; a rare bird — 'рідкість'; a fly on the wheel — 'крапля в морі'; to live like a rat in a hole — 'жити в повній самітності'; one swallow does not make a summer — 'одна ластівка весни не робить'. Unextensive use of phrases is stipulated by the fact that English speakers pay less attention to those things and phenomena which are not so widespread and attract less attention of interlocutors.

Conclusions. Thus, the comparison of animalistic verbal set phrases in the languages compared convincingly proved that the animalistic component is more frequently used in English verbal phrase formation than Ukrainian. Moreover, the features of character that are ascribed to a certain group of people by animalistic components in both languages are not always the same as far as semantic peculiarities are concerned. It testifies to the fact, that the views of English and Ukrainian speakers are distantly related as they perceive the world in this sphere of observation from essentially different angles.

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### АНГЛІЙСЬКІ АНІМАЛІСТИЧНІ ФРАЗЕМИ ДІЄСЛІВНОЇ СЕМАНТИКИ ТА ЇХНІ УКРАЇНСЬКІ ЕКВІВАЛЕНТИ

Анотація. У статті йдеться про особливості та способи вираження семантики в анімалістичних компонентах дієслівних фразем в англійській та їхні відповідники в українській мові. У ній дається сучасне визначення фразеологічного звороту. Запропоновані у статті підходи до наукового аналізу ґрунтуються на розумінні фразеології як семантичного феномену, в якому зіставлення різномовних одиниць реалізується в установленні співвіднесеності як їхнього узагальнено переносного значення, так і внутрішньої форми, що їх мотивує й активно підтримує високий конотативний потенціал. У статті також дається визначення фразеотворенню як ученню про закономірні процеси виникнення й розвитку фразеологічних одиниць, у якому об'єднуються діахронні та синхронні аспекти дослідження. В основу наукової розвідки покладено принципи фразеологічної концепції О.В. Куніна та його метод фразеологічної ідентифікації. Крім нього, використані також описовий та метод аналізу словникових дефініцій із декількох тлумачних і фразеологічних словників у двох зіставлюваних мовах для досягнення якомога більшої об'єктивності в репрезентації результатів. Аналіз відібраного емпіричного матеріалу для статті довів наявність таких 5 анімалістичних підгруп: 1) анімалістичні фраземи на позначення широкого поля діяльності та поведінки людини; 2) інформація про стан та самопочуття людини; 3) опис взаємостосунків між людьми; 4) темпорально зумовлені анімалістичні фраземи; 5) анімалістичні вербальні фраземи квантитативної репрезентації дії. Кожна з цих дієслівних підгруп докладно проаналізована з наведенням численних прикладів із двох зіставлюваних мов. У процесі дослідження з'ясовано, що анімалістичний компонент частіше використовується в англійському фразеотворенні, ніж в українському. Що стосується семантичних особливостей, то відзначено, що риси характеру, притаманні певним групам людей, відтворені у фраземах за допомогою анімалістичних компонентів, у більшості випадків в обох мовах не збігаються.

**Ключові слова:** фразема, фразеологія, фразеотворення, фразеологічна ідентифікація, анімалістичний компонент.

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