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RESEARCH

Generic Structure of Thesis Abstract Written by English Education Student: A Comparative Study

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Kata Kunci: *Genre Analisis, Abstract, Hyland Framework.*

Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti struktur generik bagian abstrak yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa sarjana di Aceh yang mengambil jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Kumpulan data yang digunakan dalam studi ini terdiri dari 20 abstrak tesis terpilih dari dua universitas di Aceh. Analisis data mengikuti model struktur lima langkah Hyland dari bagian abstrak. Temuan tersebut menunjukkan bahwa model struktur lima langkah Hyland adalah alat yang efektif untuk menyelidiki struktur langkah bagian abstrak. Lebih jauh, struktur langkah tidak menunjukkan varians yang signifikan di semua kumpulan data. Langkah 2, 3, dan 4 adalah langkah yang paling sering terjadi, sehingga menjadikannya wajib. Temuan tersebut dapat membantu instruktur Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) mengajar dan mempersiapkan siswa mereka untuk menulis bagian abstrak.

Key Word: *Genre Analysis, Abstract, Hyland Framework.*

Abstract

This study looks into the generic structure of abstract sections written by undergraduate students in Aceh majoring in English Education. The dataset used in this study consists of 20 selected thesis abstracts from two universities in Aceh. The data analysis follows Hyland's five-move structural model of the abstract section. The findings suggest that Hyland's five-move structure model is an effective tool for investigating the abstract section's move structure. Furthermore, the move structures show no significant variance across any datasets. Moves 2, 3, and 4 are the most commonly occurring moves, making them obligatory. The findings could help English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors teach and prepare their students to write the abstract part.

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INTRODUCTION

Abstract writing has become a standard practice in academic writing throughout higher education. An abstract has been acknowledged as the initial stage in readers' decision-making on whether to continue reading it (Hyland, 2007). Thus, the necessity to write abstracts productively has grown in the field of education, with academics being expected to use this expertise to publish their work internationally as part of their graduation or professional achievement. Furthermore, the thesis abstract is an important part of students' work because it is one of the first things an examiner will view (Paltridge and Starfield, 2007). Along with their vital roles and functions in research areas, thesis abstracts have received a great deal of attention and have been investigated from a variety of angles. Because there are so many research publications available online these days, most readers limit their search to titles and abstracts before picking which research article or thesis abstract to read further (Alhuqbani, 2013). According to Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), there are four reasons why an abstract is significant in research studies. First, it makes crucial information or statements easily accessible. Second, it serves as a screening method, allowing readers to determine whether they will read the entire text. Third, it provides a framework for readers to navigate the article. Fourth, it provides summaries of the main points of a study article.

The current study uses the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approach to genre analysis. The ESP approach to genre analysis is based on Swales' (1981, 1990) work on the RA Introduction. Swales (1990) defines genres as purpose-driven texts arranged into smaller parts or components called moves. Swales believes that each move serves a communicative goal and that the overall communicative purpose of a genre is a combination of the communicative purposes of its moves. Given that each move has a communicative

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aim, those intentions impact the language resources used in moves. Theoretical frameworks and linguistic trends across disciplines, languages, and native versus non-native English-speaking authors are the main topics of recent study on genre analysis of thesis abstracts. Studies emphasize the use of models, like the five-move framework developed by Hyland (2000) (Introduction, Purpose, Method, Results, Conclusion), to show how abstracts are structured and how these structures vary depending on the field and language background.

For instance, a comparative analysis of Ph.D. thesis abstracts from native and non-native English speakers discovered that native English abstracts frequently omit or change some moves, but non-native speakers consistently adhere to the whole five-move pattern. This shows that non-native authors may favor clarity and structure to better fulfill academic requirements. Native English speakers, by contrast, may exhibit greater flexibility, possibly due to stronger knowledge of the norms and confidence in presenting findings persuasively (Manzoor et al., 2022). Another line of research has compared rhetorical movements in abstracts from languages such as English, Persian, and Arabic. These cross-linguistic studies highlight how cultural and disciplinary norms influence rhetorical techniques. Persian and Arabic abstracts, for example, may contain more comprehensive background information, indicating a culturally ingrained manner of thorough contextualization. English abstracts, however, frequently favor conciseness and a plain result orientation, driven by the goal of efficiently presenting findings to a worldwide audience (Alotaibi, 2015; Marefat & Mohammadzadeh, 2013).

Disparities in abstract organization are also shown by discipline-specific genre analysis. In contrast to abstracts in the humanities, which may prefer descriptive moves and hedging language to accommodate for interpretation, engineering abstracts, for example, typically use more technical and precise language. According to studies in this field, certain language traits, such as lexical bundles and metadiscourse markers, are employed differently in different domains and serve to both improve coherence and represent distinct disciplinary identities (see Maswana et al., 2015). This collection of studies emphasizes how academic discipline, cultural background, and linguistic ability affect thesis abstract genre conventions. According to this, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses can benefit from these comparative insights by assisting non-native English speakers in comprehending and implementing efficient abstract frameworks for academic publication in a variety of settings.

Genre analysis has become an important technique for understanding how various academic writings convey information, yet genre analysis of thesis abstracts is a largely unexplored subject. While research articles and other academic genres have received a lot of attention, there has been little research on thesis abstracts, particularly their rhetorical patterns, linguistic qualities, and cultural variances. Thesis abstracts are vital components of scholarly communication because they capture the essence of substantial study in a succinct format. Understanding the structures and conventions of thesis abstracts is critical, particularly in a globalized academic environment where non-native English speakers frequently produce and disseminate research in English.

The lack of research on this problem can be due to a variety of variables, one of which is the focus of current genre analysis studies. Much of the work in genre analysis has focused on published research articles, particularly in high-impact journals, due to their large audience and established traditions. For example, Hyland (2000) and Swales (1990) developed foundational models for move analysis in research article abstracts, stressing structured sequences such as the five-move model (Introduction, Purpose, Method, Results, and Conclusion), which is extensively used in article summaries. However, thesis abstracts, which may differ in organization due to institutional restrictions or less conventional formatting rules, have received less scrutiny (Hyland, 2000).

In studies that focus on thesis abstracts, researchers discover intriguing differences in rhetorical structures between disciplines, languages, and even between native and non-native English writers. Research has revealed, for example, that thesis abstracts frequently mirror discipline-specific traditions, with humanities abstracts occasionally adopting more descriptive or exploratory tones, whereas scientific abstracts are more straightforward and data-oriented. This variance emphasizes the need for more focused genre analysis to address how thesis abstracts may necessitate different approaches when teaching academic writing to students from various fields (Maswana, Kanamaru, & Tajino, 2015).

While genre analysis of thesis abstracts has received considerable attention, there is an obvious need for additional research in this field. Expanding genre analysis studies to cover a wider range of thesis abstracts could help us better understand how students in various fields and cultural situations form academic identities and express their research contributions. Such research has the potential to improve writing teaching, foster cross-cultural understanding, and increase the availability of academic writing assistance for

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graduate students worldwide. By widening the scope of genre analysis to include thesis abstracts, academics can better address the unique challenges and expectations that emerging researchers face, particularly in multilingual and transdisciplinary settings.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach to investigate the rhetorical structures and linguistic features in thesis abstracts, using Hyland's (2004) five-move model as the primary analytical framework. Hyland's model, which divides abstract components into five separate moves—Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion—allows for a systematic examination of the communicative goals and linguistic tactics employed by thesis authors. Using this methodology, this study seeks to investigate how these shifts are structured and distributed among thesis abstracts across datasets.

Data collection

The data for this study are thesis abstracts from two universities: Syiah Kuala University and UIN Ar-Raniry. A total of 20 abstracts were picked from the university's institutional repository, with 20 representing the English education subject. The abstracts were selected based on their accessibility, recent completion dates (within the last five years), and the usage of English as the major language. This diversity of disciplines and recent publications enables comparative research across fields while reflecting contemporary academic practices.

Analytical Framework

Hyland's (2004) five-move model is employed as the analytical framework, guiding the identification and categorization of rhetorical moves in each abstract. The moves are defined as follows: 1) Introduction – provides background information or establishes the significance of the research; 2) Purpose – states the primary aim or research question of the study; 3) Method – describes the research methodology and approach used; 4) Product – presents the main findings or results; 5) Conclusion – discusses the implications or future directions based on the findings.

Move	Function
Introduction	Establishing context of the paper and motivating the research or discussion
Purpose	Indicating purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlining the intension behind the paper
Method	Providing information on design, procedures, assumptions, approach, data, etc.
Product	Stating main findings or results, the argument, or what is accomplished.
Conclusion	Interpreting or extending results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, pointing to applications or wider implications.

Figure 1. Hyland's Framework

Coding Procedure

A coding scheme was developed using Hyland's (2004) framework, and each abstract was manually coded by the researcher. Any differences were worked out through conversation, and the coding method was adjusted as needed. Each move was categorized based on its appearance, position in the abstract, and frequency of occurrence.

Data Analysis

The analysis was performed in two phases: move pattern analysis and move frequency analysis. In the initial stage, the move patterns were determined to discover how the writer created their abstract. The second stage involved calculating the frequency of each move to identify which moves were more common in each dataset's abstracts. Hyland's (2004) approach stresses the relevance of linguistic elements in signaling various rhetorical maneuvers, therefore this stage requires a thorough examination of language to identify patterns specific to each subject.

Ethical Considerations

This study's data comprises publicly accessible thesis abstracts. To ensure anonymity, the identity of the thesis writers and their precise institutional affiliations have been anonymized. All abstracts were retrieved with permission, and the findings are provided without identifying particular authors. This structure

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ensures that each step of the technique is consistent with Hyland's (2004) framework, allowing for a careful evaluation of rhetorical maneuvers and leading to a more comprehensive understanding of genre standards in thesis abstracts across fields.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

RESULTS

Generic Structure of Thesis Abstract

In this analysis, we discovered a five-move pattern that characterizes the thesis abstract in all datasets. These moves are the Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion. Extract 1 below depicts a typical abstract that includes all five moves:

Extract 1

[**Introduction**]Vocabulary is found in every aspect of language so that vocabulary affects student learning activities in learning English. Vocabulary is a list or collection of words for a particular language or a list or collection of words that may be used by speakers of a particular language. Suggestopedia Method is one of the methods that can be used to help students learn vocabulary. [**Purpose**]The aim of this study was to determine the effect of Suggestopedia Method on Students' Vocabulary Mastery. [**Method**]This research was quantitative research with experimental design. The population in this study was students of SMKN 1 Mesjid Raya which amounted to approximately 355 students. The two classes that were selected as research samples were 37 students of class X Desain Komunikasi Visual (DKV) as experimental group and 26 students of class X Tata Busana (TBS) as control group by cluster random sampling. The data collected by giving a multiple-choice test. Similiar tests was used for pre-test and post-test. Each test consisted of 15 items included 4 option, namely a,b,c,d. [**Product**] The results using the Wilcoxon test showed a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. [**Conclusion**]Thus it can be concluded that the use of Suggestopedia method has a significant effect on students ' vocabulary mastery. Students who were taught using the Suggestopedia method (experimental group) gained scored higher than students who were not taught using the Suggestopedia method (control group). [dataset 2].

The abstract, as seen in Extract 1, contains five moves. In this abstract, it is noted that the Introduction provides context for the investigation. The researcher presents the issue by highlighting the focus of past studies in the field. This is followed by the Purpose move, which explains the paper's focus. The researcher then presents the Method, which describes the data sources and participants. The Method move is fused with the Product move since it appears in the first sentence of the latter. Essentially, the product move summarizes the study findings. The abstract ends with the Conclusion move. Another five-move article is presented in extract 2 below.

Extract 2

[**Introduction**] It is a commonplace to find several the-lagging-behind students in completing their study every year. [**Purpose**] This study was carried out to find out inhibiting factors experienced by the students in completing their study. [**Method**] In doing so, this research used a qualitative method involving a questionnaire and interview to collect data from EFL students in one of the Islamic Universities in Aceh. This study is underpinned and used by self-determination theory (SDT). SDT is relevant for this study because it can be used to frame the student's phenomena in completing their study. [**Product**] It is found that the students lag because of three aspects, including autonomy in learning, lack of competence, and less relatedness. Autonomy, such as a lack of motivation to complete their study; Competence, such as difficulties in writing a thesis, failure in some courses, struggles in the research process and inability fulfilling the requirements for thesis defense; The last is relatedness, such as financial support (e.g., working part-time), playmates, participating organizations, and the home atmosphere; the English language department and supervisors are also factors that inhibit students from completing their study on time; the last factor is due to COVID-19. [**Conclusion**] Overall, the 2015 and 2016 academic years lag behind students who experienced the most dominant problem during thesis supervision with their supervisor.

In excerpt 2, the author starts by emphasizing the topic of the study in the first phrase. This is followed by an explanation of the topic. The first two sentences so comprise the Introduction move. Following the Introduction follows the Purpose move, in which the author explains his goal. This is followed by the Method step, in which the author outlines the study participants, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures. The author then presents the research findings in the Product move, followed by the Conclusion.

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Move pattern in each datasets

Move pattern in dataset one (USK)

Abstract	Move Pattern	Number of Moves
Dataset 1 (USK)		
A1	M1-M2-M3-M4	4
A2	M1-M2-M3-M4	4
A3	M2-M3-M4-M5	4
A4	M2-M3-M4-M5	4
A5	M2-M3-M4-M5	4
A6	M2-M3-M4-M5	4
A7	M2-M1-M4-M5	4
A8	M2-M3-M5-M4	4
A9	M2-M3-M4-M5	4
A10	M3-M2-M3-M4-M5	5

The table above displays a list of abstracts by identifiers from A1 to A10 from dataset 1 (USK). Each identifier most likely correlates to a distinct abstract in the collection, which has been examined for its movement pattern. This column describes the series of moves connected with each abstract. Each move is indicated by a "M" followed by a number (for instance, M1, M2). The sequences indicate the structural or thematic development of content inside each abstract, such as introduction, methods, findings, and conclusion (although the precise meaning of each "move" is not given here). Most abstracts follow a similar sequence of moves, beginning with M1 and proceeding in different orders, with minor modifications.

The move pattern for these abstracts is primarily composed of four moves: M1, M2, M3, and M4. The sequences are A1, A2: M1, M2, M3, and M4. A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9: M2-M3-M4-M5, M2-M1-M4-M5, M2-M3-M4-M5 (variations on M1, M2, M3, M4, M5). All of these have four moves, except for A10, which has five. The move pattern is generally M2-M3-M4-M5, with some abstracts beginning with M1 and progressing to the others (such as A7 and A8). This demonstrates that the bulk of the abstracts have a similar hierarchical arrangement, with only a few (such as A7 and A8) showing minor changes in the sequence of moves. The sequence here is M3-M2-M3-M4-M5 (A10), which is unique because it is the only abstract with five moves. A10's pattern is more complex than the others, implying that this abstract contains the additional substance or has a more elaborate structure, as suggested by the 5-move sequence. It could indicate a more complex progression, involving a more extensive or layered investigation of abstract themes.

The majority of the abstracts in Dataset 1 have the same structure, with four moves (M1-M2-M3-M4) or a little change (e.g., M2-M1-M4-M5). Only one abstract, A10, deviates by including five moves. This implies a somewhat uniform way of arranging abstracts in the dataset, albeit some freedom exists. The extra motion in A10 could indicate a more complex organization or a need for further explanation, making it an intriguing outlier.

Move pattern in dataset two (UIN)

Abstract	Move Pattern	Number of Moves	Average move
Dataset 2 (UIN)			
A1	M2-M3-M4	3	4
A2	M1-M2-M3-M4-M5	5	
A3	M1-M2-M3-M4	4	
A4	M1-M2-M3-M4	4	
A5	M2-M3-M4-M5	4	
A6	M1-M2-M3-M4-M5	5	
A7	M2-M3-M4	3	
A8	M2-M3-M4-M5	4	
A9	M1-M2-M3-M4	4	
A10	M1-M2-M3-M4	4	

The table above depicts the move patterns in abstracts, with each row describing a specific abstract's sequence of moves, the number of moves, and the average number of moves across the collection. Here's an explanation of each component in the table and what it means. The sequences differ slightly amongst abstracts, with some having more moves than others. The observed sequences are M2-M3-M4 for A1 and A7, each with three moves. M1-M2-M3-M4-M5 for A2 and A6, both having five moves. M1-M2-M3-M4 for A3, A4, A9, and A10, each requiring four moves. M2-M3-M4-M5 for A5 and A8, each with four moves. This difference in move patterns implies that abstracts within Dataset 2 can be structured in a variety of ways, with some having shorter sequences and others more elaborate.

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The most common patterns seen are M1-M2-M3-M4 and M2-M3-M4-M5, both of which occur many times. This suggests a preference or standard for a four-move structure, whether starting with M1 or M2. The 5-move sequence M1-M2-M3-M4-M5 (in A2 and A6) may represent a more extensive or detailed abstract structure, maybe containing more information or analysis. A1 and A7 only make three moves (M2-M3-M4). These abstracts may be more brief or eliminate opening or concluding parts, instead focusing solely on essential outcomes or findings.

Overall, In Dataset 2, most abstracts have a regular structure of four or five movements, but the sequence is somewhat flexible. The three-move abstracts deviate from this pattern, indicating a more focused or minimum structure. The variations in move patterns may imply variances in abstract writing styles or requirements within this dataset. Overall, the 4-move average indicates that the abstracts are generally constructed to address crucial issues without going into great depth, resulting in a balanced length and structure.

The Comparison between the Two Datasets (UIN VS USK)

Datasets 1 (USK) and 2 (UIN) include abstracts that generally follow a 4-move structure, indicating a regular pattern that presumably includes fundamental parts such as an introduction, methodology, results, and conclusions. However, Dataset 1 has a more consistent structure, with almost all abstracts comprising exactly four moves, except for one outlier with five moves. This consistency implies that the abstracts in Dataset 1 may adhere to stricter formatting requirements or take a systematic approach that encourages a balanced and predictable flow of information.

In comparison, Dataset 2 shows more diversity, with abstractions including three, four, or five moves. While the 4-move form is still the most prevalent, the existence of shorter 3-move abstracts and more thorough 5-move abstracts demonstrates versatility. This variance could signal that Dataset 2 supports varied levels of depth and style in abstract writing, appealing to a greater range of research interests or preferences. Overall, while both datasets focus on fundamental material, Dataset 1's consistency contrasts with Dataset 2's adaptive approach, which accommodates a variety of abstract forms.

Frequency of the moves in Two Datasets

Moves	USK (N=10)		Status	UIN (N=10)		Status
	N	%		N	%	
Move 1: Introduction	2	20%	Optional	6	60%	Obligatory
Move 2: purpose	10	100%	Obligatory	10	100%	Obligatory
Move 3: Method	9	90%	Obligatory	10	100%	Obligatory
Move 4: Product	10	100%	Obligatory	10	100%	Obligatory
Move 5: Conclusion	7	70%	Obligatory	4	40%	Optional

Table above showed the frequency of the moves in each datasets. It can be seen that in the Introduction (Move 1), the USK dataset includes this move in only 20% of cases, showing that it is infrequently utilized and deemed "Optional." In contrast, the UIN dataset includes the Introduction in 60% of cases, with this step designated as "Obligatory" for them. This distinction demonstrates that UIN places a greater focus on introducing the topic or creating context than USK, which views it as less important. The Purpose (Move 2) is categorized as "Obligatory" in both datasets, and it appears in 100% of occurrences across both USK and UIN. This consistency shows that defining the aim is an essential component of the structure in both datasets, regardless of group. The repeated inclusion of this maneuver demonstrates its importance in establishing the purpose or justification.

The Method (Move 3) and Product (Move 4) moves are listed as "Obligatory" across USK and UIN, with near-total or complete frequency. The Method move occurs in 90% of occurrences in USK and 100% in UIN, but the Product move occurs in 100% of both datasets. These high frequencies emphasize the necessity of explaining the procedure and detailing the result, underlining their positions as essential components in both structures. Finally, the Conclusion (Move 5) varies between datasets. USK deems this move to be "obligatory" in 70% of cases, whilst UIN considers it "optional" in just 40%. This variation indicates that the Conclusion is considered more important in the USK structure, but the UIN is less consistent in incorporating a concluding move. This disparity could be due to differing priorities of the datasets, with USK prioritizing closure and UIN potentially leaving findings open-ended.

DISCUSSIONS

The research finds diverse trends in the construction of thesis abstracts across the two datasets (USK and UIN), stressing both similar traditions and significant differences. A common result is that both datasets

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follow a four-move structure, indicating a uniform approach to abstract organization. This consistency emphasizes the importance of aim, method, findings, and conclusion in abstract writing, in line with recognized academic standards for succinct yet complete study summaries.

The USK dataset is remarkably consistent, with almost all abstracts following a four-move pattern except for one outlier with a five-move structure. This uniformity implies strict formatting constraints, which are likely to support a methodical display of information. In comparison, the UIN dataset is more adaptable, offering three-, four-, and five-move abstractions. This variation may reflect different institutional requirements or more leeway in abstract construction, allowing for a wider range of academic disciplines or research focuses.

A fundamental distinction is how the Introduction (Move 1) is treated. While USK abstracts mention this step in just 20% of situations, judging it as optional, UIN abstracts include it in 60% of cases, classifying it as mandatory. This distinction emphasizes divergent goals, with UIN placing a higher emphasis on contextualizing the research. Similarly, while the Purpose (Move 2), Method (Move 3), and Product (Move 4) are consistently included and required in both datasets, the Conclusion (Move 5) differs. It is considered mandatory in USK (70%) but optional in UIN (40%), indicating disparities in the perceived importance of clearly concluding abstracts.

These findings demonstrate the impact of institutional conventions on abstract writing. The tight structure of USK abstracts may aid in clear communication of research, especially for readers accustomed to standardized formats. In contrast, the diversity of UIN abstracts indicates a more adjustable approach, allowing academics to tailor their abstracts to suit audiences or goals. Both techniques have advantages; the former provides clarity and predictability, whereas the latter supports diverse study objectives and styles.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the investigation of move patterns in abstracts from Datasets 1 (USK) and 2 (UIN) demonstrates both parallels and variations in structural preferences. While both datasets largely follow a four-move format, Dataset 1 exhibits a high level of uniformity, indicating adherence to stringent criteria emphasizing clear and conventional abstract writing. In contrast, Dataset 2 displays higher flexibility, with abstracts spanning from 3 to 5 movements, indicating more adaptable or less prescriptive constraints that allow authors to customize abstracts to research complexity. These findings are consistent with prior research on academic writing, which has shown that institutional or disciplinary requirements can influence abstract form, balancing the need for clarity and accessibility with the adaptability required for varied study topics. This comparative research emphasizes the need of understanding abstract standards and changing writing styles to efficiently meet formal guidelines as well as audience expectations. In terms of move frequency, the study reveals that, while both USK and UIN consistently include Purpose, Method, and Product moves as required components, they differ in how they regard the Introduction and Conclusion. UIN places more value on the Introduction, identifying it as mandatory and includes it more frequently, whereas USK views it as optional. In contrast, USK values the Conclusion more highly, seeing it as mandatory and including it in a higher number of cases than UIN, which considers it optional. These variances imply that each dataset prioritizes key structural features differently, most likely reflecting separate rhetorical or organizational preferences.

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