Research on the Association Relationship Between Type-of-Words of Monosyllabic Word in the Modern Chinese

Dongjie Zhou
College of Humanities
Xiamen University
Xiamen, China
zhoudongjie0396@163.com

Zezhi Zheng
College of Humanities
Xiamen University
Xiamen, China
zezhizheng@126.com

Abstract—In order to further enrich the related research work of monosyllabic words, the type-of-words issue of monosyllabic word in the modern Chinese was investigated. Firstly, the monosyllabic words which were marked with the type-of-word in Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition), were statistically analyzed. The analysis results showed that most of monosyllabic words were the mono-type-of-words, and monosyllabic words had the characteristic of multi-types-of-word. Subsequently, the association relationship between type-of-words of monosyllabic words was investigated from the perspective of synchronic plane. The investigation results showed that the relationships between verb-type-of-word and other-type-of-word were the most complex, the interrelated relations among noun-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and adjective-type-of-word were existed, the interrelated relations among adjective-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word were also existed, etc. Furthermore, the cognitive semantics was used to study the relationship regulations among multi-types-of-words. It was found that nouns and verbs can derive adjective usage, verbs can produce adverb usage, etc. as a result of that the peoples recognized things from concrete to abstract. In this way, the relationship regulations between multi-types-of-words were gained.

Keywords: monosyllabic word, multi-types-of-word, association relationship between type-of-words, cognitive habit

I. INTRODUCTION

The main expression form of language in the written language of the ancient Chinese was the one-Chinese-character which was used as one-word. In this way, the language expression of ancient Chinese seemed to be started from the Chinese-character. In fact, the expression of Chinese from ancient to modern was done by word. The corresponding form of word in ancient Chinese was one-Chinese-character. With the development of society, the complexity and richness of language expression needed to be increased. However, if the main form of one-word with one-Chinese-character maintained, the number of the used expressing words would be large. In this way, the brain of human beings would be overburdened. Therefore, the combinations of the existed Chinese-characters were gradually used to express the new things, new concepts and other previously non-existent semantics. Thus, the corresponding form of word was transited from one-Chinese-character to multi-Chinese-characters [1].

Although the majority of the words in modern Chinese vocabulary system were disyllabic words, the usage frequency of disyllabic words was far less than that of monosyllabic words. Monosyllabic words had the characteristics of high usage frequency. For example, according to the statistics of the number and frequency of monosyllabic words and disyllabic words in the Modern Chinese Frequency Dictionary by Su (2014), it was found that the type number of monosyllabic words only had 12% of the total usage type number, but the usage frequency had 64.3% of the total frequency [2]. It can be concluded that compared with disyllabic words, the type number of monosyllabic words was few, however the usage frequency was very high. Wang (2017) found that more than three quarters of the frequently used Chinese-characters with first-class were monosyllabic words by a statistical study of 2500 frequently used Chinese-characters with first-class in the List of frequently used Chinese-characters in Modern Chinese [3]. Li (2009) showed that the more proportion of monosyllabic words was existed in the more frequently used Chinese-characters [4]. Meanwhile, monosyllabic words played a unique role in the Chinese vocabulary system. For example, according to the researches of Wang (2000; 2003) on the scope, nature and status of monosyllabic words, it was found that there were about 3000 monosyllabic words with single form, rich content and high usage frequency, which were the core of the basic vocabulary and the breakthrough point for describing the modern Chinese vocabulary system [5].

Up to now, the issue concerning the usage frequency of monosyllabic words had been clearly discussed. Moreover, the nature and status of monosyllabic words in Chinese also had been clearly defined. However, the systematic research of monosyllabic words concerning the type-of-word problems had not been done. The study of monosyllabic words mainly focused on the type-of-word compilation and the type-of-word conversion. For the type-of-word compilation of monosyllabic words, Zhou (2011) discussed the type-of-word mark and compilation problems of monosyllabic words in the Modern Chinese Dictionary, and proposed that monosyllabic words should be listed as word entries in the Modern Chinese Dictionary [6]. For the type-of-word conversion of monosyllabic words, Wu (2004) mentioned the mutual conversion phenomenon of the referential function and statement function of monosyllabic words [7]. Li (2009) took bèi as an example to discuss the transformation of type-of-
word of monosyllabic words [8]. Wu and Wang (2012) investigated the syntactic, semantic and functional differences of monosyllabic words in modern Chinese, while the nouns of monosyllabic words changed to be the adjectives of monosyllabic words [9]. Dong (2018) took monosyllabic words as the main examples to discuss the process and rationality for changing noun-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word to adjective-type-of-words [10]. According to the above studies, it was found that the transformation and correlation between types-of-words of monosyllabic words were existed. However, most of the researches on the types-of-words transformation of monosyllabic words used some examples to demonstrate the relevant ideas, which lacked the quantitative support of statistical data. Moreover, a certain typical kind of transformation phenomenon was mainly focused on, the comprehensive investigation about the association relationship between the type-of-words of monosyllabic words were lacked. Especially the discussion of the atypical transformation phenomenon of type-of-words was lacked.

In view of the weakness of the research of the monosyllabic words in modern Chinese, combining the database method, the monosyllabic words included in Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th Edition), which was the authoritative representative of modern Chinese vocabulary system, was used as research object to be counted and analyzed. The number and type of the monosyllabic words were obtained to show the overall appearance of monosyllabic words in modern Chinese. Moreover, in view of the perspective of synchronic plane, the type-of-words relationship of monosyllabic words was analyzed to reveal the association regulation of type-of-words.

II. RESOURCE DATABASE CONSTRUCTION AND TYPE ANALYSIS OF MONOSYLLABIC WORDS

A. Resource Database Construction

Monosyllabic word played an important role in modern Chinese. It was of great significance for the further research of the monosyllabic words in Modern Chinese Dictionary to investigate that how many monosyllabic words were used in modern Chinese language. According to Wang’s research work (2000), 3004 monosyllabic words were found in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the revised edition) [5]. After nearly 20-years continuous revision of the Modern Chinese Dictionary, the types of monosyllabic words included in the Modern Chinese Dictionary had changed with the dynamic development of language. In order to obtain the number and types of monosyllabic words in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th Edition), the resource database of Chinese-character headers was established. The resource database of Chinese-character headers contained multiple attributes such as serial number, Chinese-character header, pronunciation, meanings, the type-of-words, association information between type-of-words, page number.

The main standards for judging the association information between type-of-words in the resource database of Chinese-character headers were as follows.

Firstly, the type-of-words information of each Chinese-character header had been labeled in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th Edition), which was the basis for judging association relationship between the type-of-words [11].

Secondly, when multiple meanings were in the same Chinese-character header, the basic meaning of the Chinese-character header was firstly listed in the meaning location of Chinese-character header of the Modern Chinese Dictionary. The above phenomenon was as a result of that the basic meaning of multi-meanings words was took as the priority in the psychological dictionary of human beings, which can be originated from the Modern Chinese Dictionary Compiling Rules (1958) [12]. However, the basic meaning may not be the original meaning. Compared with the original meaning, the usage value of the basic meaning and its related influence on the development of word meaning were higher. As a consequence, according to the order of word meanings marked with type-of-words in the Chinese-character header, combined with the semanteme analysis method (the method was used to examine whether there were identical sememe or semantic feature in the semantic construction of word meanings), the type-of-word which was used as the leading role in the mutual associated type-of-words was determined.

Thirdly, the Modern Chinese Dictionary was not only used for language research, but also used as a reference book for public service. In the process of compilation, the principles of items separation must be considered in the lexical and lexicographic perspective. Therefore, in order to make the items look concise and clear, some meanings which were not relevant to each other sometimes must be in the same Chinese-character header [13]. In this way, the mark of association information between the type-of-words should be paid more attention to avoid the misjudgment of association information between the type-of-words.

All the Chinese-characters headers in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition) were included in the Chinese-character header resource database. A total of 9204 non-repeating Chinese-character headers were found in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition). Only 3,239 monosyllabic words which can be independently used in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition) was found, and constituted the 35% of the total number of Chinese-characters headers in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition).

B. Type Analysis

According to the number and distribution of types-of-words, the monosyllabic words in Modern Chinese Dictionary can be divided into one-type-of-word monosyllabic word and multi-types-of-word monosyllabic word. The most of monosyllabic words were the one-type-of-word monosyllabic words which had the 76.3% of the total monosyllabic words. The number of multi-types-of-word monosyllabic word was 768, constituting 23.7% of the total monosyllabic words. Therefore, the monosyllabic words not only had the characteristics such as frequent usage and the core of basic vocabulary, but also had the characteristic of multi-types-of-word. The distribution of
the subclass of one-type-of-word monosyllabic word and multi-types-of-word monosyllabic word will be analyzed in detail as below.

| Number of type-word | Quantity | Type and example |
|---------------------|----------|------------------|
| 1                   | 2471     | noun: 1148; verb: 867; adjective(adj): 46; quantifier: 104; onomatopoeia: 55; adverb(adj): 51; numeral: 26; interjection: 26; pronoun(pron): 19; auxiliary word: 11; affix: 6; preposition(pre): 5; conjunction(conj): 5; Quantifier: 2. Examples: bǐng(饼), jīān(捱), àn(暗), mǔ(饼), dōng(咚), bù(不), sān(三), ài(哎), wǒ(我), mā(妈), měn(们), jū(居), suī(随), lì(例). |
| 2                   | 570      | noun & verb: 184; noun & quantifier: 83; adj & verb: 64; verb & quantifier: 48; noun & adv: 36; verb & adv: 24; verb & prep: 30; adv & prep: 20; adj & adv: 18; numeral & noun: 8; adv & conj: 5; verb & conj: 5; noun & adv: 5; onomatopoeia & verb: 5; others: 65. Examples: suō(锁), tiān(天), jīng(静), fēng(封), shèn(神), tōu(头), dēng(等), dā(大), qī(七), huǐ(毁), wǒ(我). |
| 3                   | 164      | verb & noun & quantifier: 60; adj & verb & noun: 28; adv & verb & adv: 17; verb & prep: 17; verb & adv: 9; noun & adj & quantifier: 5; verb & adj & quantifier: 5; others: 23. Examples: pāi(排), tiě(铁), fēi(飞), mǎ(马), yōng(用), zhōng(中), jīn(金), fāng(方). |
| 4                   | 21       | adj & verb & noun & adv: 7; noun & quantifier & verb & adv: 2; verb & adv & prep & noun: 1; noun & verb & prep & conj: 1; adv & verb & adv & affix: 1; others: 9. Examples: zhī(直), dūn(单), chōng(冲), dīng(顶), fēi(非), gān(干), gēn(跟), guǐ(鬼). |
| 5                   | 12       | noun & quantifier & verb & prep & auxiliary: 1; verb & adv & quantifier & noun & adv: 1; verb & prep & adv & adv & affix: 1; adv & pron & verb & numeral & adv: 1; others: 8. Examples: bāi(白), běn(本), zhōng(中), dēng(等), duì(对), duì(对), guī(规), qī(气), shēng(生), tōu(头), zhǔn(准). |
| 6                   | 1        | adj & verb & prep & conj & noun & quantifier. Example: hē
hē
hē
hō
hō
hū
(和). |

As shown in Table I, the most of one-type-of-word monosyllabic words were the monosyllabic words which referred to things, namely noun-type-of-word monosyllabic words. Moreover, 306 monosyllabic words in the noun-type-of-word monosyllabic words, referred to metal elements names, organic compound names, rare animal names such as fish, rare birds, rare beasts, and the names of rare or ancient plants and farm implements. If the monosyllabic words with low frequent usage in Table I were removed, only 842 monosyllabic words with noun-type-of-word were existed, the number of which was slightly less than the number of verb-type-of-word monosyllabic words.

The main basic and core types of the one-type-of-word monosyllabic words were noun-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word. The number of the adjective, quantifier, adverb, preposition, conjunction and auxiliary words in the one-type-of-word monosyllabic words were few. As concluded from the analysis of the following text, those few one-type-of-word monosyllabic words were transferred from the basic and core types of the one-type-of-word monosyllabic words.

The number of multi-types-of-word monosyllabic words was 768, constituting 23.7% of the total number of monosyllabic words. The maximum type-of-word number of the same word was 6. According to the Zhou’s research work (2007) [14], the number of V+N disyllabic words was 8101, constituting 12.46% of the total number of word items in Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition). Only 535 V+N disyllabic words with multi-types-of-word were existed, constituting 6.6% of the total V+N disyllabic words. Moreover, the maximum type-of-word number for a disyllabic word was only 3. The less number of V+N disyllabic words with multi-types-of-word showed that the total number of monosyllabic words was not much. Therefore, compared with disyllabic words, it was worthy of attention and analysis for monosyllabic words with multi-types-of-word character.

In addition, the semantic associations between the type-of-words in some multi-types-of-word monosyllabic words were also found. For example, the adjective meaning of Jing was stable and silent which was used for describing a state. However, the verb meaning of Jing was to make something stable and silent, which made something have a state of Jīng. The meanings of the adjective and verb were closely related. Moreover, according to the order of the two meanings in the dictionary, the adjective meaning was the basic meaning and the core meaning, while the verb meaning was derived from the adjective meaning. In view of the synchronic plane, this kind of semantic association in the different type-of-words was the result of the diachronic evolution of word meaning. In the view of the synchronic plane, the summary of the association regulation in the type-of-words, can provide clues for the diachronic study of word meaning. In the next section, the association relationship and regulation in the different type-of-words of multi-types-of-word monosyllabic word would be analyzed in detail.

III. ASSOCIATION ANALYSIS IN THE TYPE-OF-WORDS OF MULTI-TYPES-OF-WORD MONOSYLLABIC WORDS

Due to the limited space of this paper, the analysis of the multi-types-of-word monosyllabic words which had interrelation in the type-of-words meanings was mainly focused on, respectively to analyze the two-types-of-word, three-types-of-word, four-types-of-word and more-types-of-word monosyllabic words.

A. Type-of-word Association Relationship of Two-types-of-word Monosyllabic Words

Noun-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word monosyllabic words were the basic and core types of the one-type-of-word...
monosyllabic words. The most of two-types-of-word monosyllabic words were the monosyllabic words with both noun-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word, the number of which was 184. 136 monosyllabic words whose type-of-words were interrelated were existed in the 184 monosyllabic words, constituting 74% of the monosyllabic words with both noun-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word. According to the function of nouns for referring the things, the nouns produced the action behavior closely related to the thing which was referred by the nouns. Based on the function of verbs for referring the action behavior, verbs produced the noun usages related to the result, object and condition of the action behavior. For example, suǒ, as a noun, referred to a metal device which was installed at the opening or closing place or connecting place of doors, windows and utensils, and can not be freely opened. However, as a verb, the action meaning of suǒ derived from the operation of the instrument of suǒ. The verb meaning of huà was to draw diagram with a pen or something similar to a pen. However, the noun meaning of huà was the working achievement of huà. The noun meaning of huà was the result of the action of huà.

The second major two-types-word monosyllabic words were the monosyllabic words with both noun-type-of-word and quantifier-of-word. The things (nouns) were firstly existed, then were used as measuring unit to measure things directly. It was in accordance with economic principles for using nouns as quantifiers, such as the two-types-word monosyllabic words of tiān, zhī and chuāng. Moreover, for the meanings of the Chinese-character headers in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition), the meaning of nouns was firstly listed in the Chinese-character header, then the meaning of quantifiers was listed in the following explanations of the Chinese-character header. Meanwhile, a large number of the monosyllabic words with both verb-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word were also existed, which was 48. The number of the monosyllabic words whose verb and quantifier meanings were related in the monosyllabic words with both verb-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word was 33, such as the two-types-word monosyllabic words of shù, bāo, fēng. Similar to the mechanism of noun-quantity monosyllabic words, it was also in line with the economic principle of Chinese for the action behavior (verb) to be used as measuring unit (quantifier) to measure the action behavior. Similarly, for the meanings of the Chinese-character headers in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th edition), the meaning of verbs was firstly listed in the Chinese-character header, then the meaning of quantifiers was listed in the following explanations of the Chinese-character header.

The third major two-types-word monosyllabic words were the monosyllabic words with both adjective-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word. The number of the monosyllabic words with both adjective-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word was 64. In the monosyllabic words with both adjective-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word, the number of monosyllabic words with the verb-type-of-word derived from the adjective-type-of-word was 40, the number of monosyllabic words with the adjective-type-of-word derived from the verb-type-of-word was 19. The mechanism for making adjective produce the related verb usage was as follow. A word for describing a certain state or nature was existed, then was used to express the behavior for achieving the state or nature. In this way, the usage of verbs was gained, such as the monosyllabic words with both adjective-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word of jīng, guī, nì. The mechanism for making verb produce the related adjective usage was as follow. A word with a certain action behavior was existed, then was used to express the state or nature which was referred by the action behavior. In this way, the usage of related adjective was gained. such as the monosyllabic words with both adjective-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word of chēn, fū, suì.

The number of the monosyllabic words with both noun-type-of-word and adjective-type-of-word was 36, 21 of which was the number of monosyllabic words whose noun-type-of-word and adjective-type-of-word were related. In quantity, compared with the monosyllabic words whose noun usage derived from adjective usage, the monosyllabic words whose adjective usage derived from noun usage were more frequently used. The mechanism for making noun produce the related adjective usage was as follow. A noun for referring to something was existed, then was used as adjective to express the state or nature of the thing itself. For example, shēn was originally used as a noun to refer to the creator and immortal of all things with superpower. Afterwards, shēn was used as an adjective to show the meanings of superb, extraordinary and magical.

The number of the monosyllabic words with both verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word was 24. The number of the monosyllabic words with both verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word whose verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word were related was 10, 9 of which was the number of monosyllabic words with adverb-type-of-word derived from verb-type-of-word. The mechanism for making verb produce the related adverb usage was as follow. A verb corresponding to an action behavior was existed, then the remarkable action state of the action behavior was used to decorate and restrict the other action behavior. In this way, the usage of related adverbs was obtained. For example, the meaning of the tōu verb referred to that someone took something from others in private or in secret. However, the remarkable action state of tōu action was in private and secret, which can be used as adverb to decorate and restrict other actions. In this way, the corresponding adverb usage was emerged such as tōukàn.

Moreover, the number of the monosyllabic words with both verb-type-of-word and preposition-type-of-word was 24. The number of the monosyllabic words with both adjective-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word was 18. Due to the limited space of this paper, these monosyllabic words with two-types-of-word were not be analyzed in detail.

B. Type-of-word Association Relationship of Three-types-of-word Monosyllabic Words

The total number of the three-types-of-word monosyllabic words was 164, 53% of which belonged to the three-types-of-word monosyllabic words whose three different type-of-words were interrelated. The 33% of the three-types-of-word monosyllabic words belonged to the three-types-of-word monosyllabic words whose three type-of-words were partially associated. The partial association relationship was the two-
types-of-words association relationship which was analyzed in the above text. In addition, 14% of three-types-of-word monosyllabic words had been unable to determine the association relationship from the current definition in the dictionary according to the sememe analysis method. Meanwhile, it was also unable to determine the no association relationship for 14% of three-types-of-word monosyllabic words. The three-types-of-word monosyllabic words whose three types-of-word were irrelevant, were not existed. It can be further inferred that the correlation relationship in the type-of-words of multi-types-of-word monosyllabic words was existed.

The major monosyllabic words whose three type-of-words were all associated, were the monosyllabic words with noun-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word. The noun-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word monosyllabic words were the main part of one-type-of-monosyllabic words. The monosyllabic words of both verb-type-of-word and noun-type-of-word, and the monosyllabic words of both noun-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word, and the monosyllabic words of both verb-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word, were the main part of two-types-of-word monosyllabic words. Thus, it can be concluded that the close relationship among noun-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word can be existed in the type-of-words of monosyllabic words.

The second major monosyllabic words whose three type-of-words were all associated, were the monosyllabic words with adjective-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and noun-type-of-word. According to the analysis of type-of-words relationship for two-syllable monosyllabic words, it can be concluded that the interrelated relationships existed in each two type-of-words of the adjective-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and noun-type-of-word. Therefore, it was reasonable for a monosyllabic word to have three-types-of-words, such as the monosyllabic words of pāi, pān and piān.

The third major monosyllabic words whose three type-of-words were all associated, were the monosyllabic words with verb-type-of-word, adjective-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word. The monosyllabic words of both adjective-type-of-word and verb-type-of-word, and the monosyllabic words of both verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word, and the monosyllabic words of both adjective-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word, were also existed in the two-types-of-word monosyllabic words. In this way, it was not surprising that three-types-of-word monosyllabic words with adjective-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word were existed, such as the monosyllabic words of mān, fān, luān.

The hidden linguistic phenomena only can be found by the integration and systematic analysis of decentralized linguistic facts. According to the analysis of the type-of-word association relationship of the two-types-of-word and three-types-of-word monosyllabic words, it was found that the verb-type-of-word was at the center of the type-of-word association relationship of all kinds of type-of-words, and had complex and diverse connections with other type-of-words.

C. Type-of-word Association Relationship of Four-types-of-word and More-types-of-word Monosyllabic Words

The total number of the four-types-of-word monosyllabic words was 21, one-third of which was the number of the monosyllabic words whose four type-of-words were associated, such as the monosyllabic words of zhi, xiǎng, ding. Nearly half of the number of the four-types-of-word monosyllabic words were the four-types-of-word monosyllabic words which had association relationship in its partial type-of-words. For example, bīng had four types-of-words of noun-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word, adverb-type-of-word and conjunction-type-of-word, whose verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word meanings were associated. However, when bīng was used as noun, it showed the nickname of Taiyuan of Shanxi Province. When bīng was used as conjunctions, the meanings of bīng were abstract which had only grammatical meanings and grammatical functions. It was difficult to find the association relationship between conjunctions and other type-of-words meanings.

The major five-types-of-word monosyllabic words were the five-types-of-word monosyllabic words which had association relationship in its partial type-of-words. For example, duì had all the types-of-word of verb-type-of-word, adjective-type-of-word, noun-type-of-word, quantifier-type-of-word and preposition-type-of-word. The association relationship between verb-type-of-word and adjective-type-of-word of duì was existed. The association relationship among verb-type-of-word, noun-type-of-word and quantifier-type-of-word was existed. The association relationship between verb-type-of-word and preposition-type-of-word was also existed. It can be shown that the association relationship of type-of-words for duì was that the verb-type-of-word used as the core type-of-word was the divergent relevance with the other type-of-words. The hé was the only six-types-of-word monosyllabic word.

IV. Conclusions

The type-of-words issue of monosyllabic words in the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7th Edition) was investigated. According to the statistic and analysis of the number and type of monosyllabic words, it was found that most of monosyllabic words were the one-type-of-word words, and monosyllabic words had the characteristic of multi-types-of-word. Moreover, the association relationships of type-of-words of monosyllabic word had certain regularities and tendencies. The association relationships between verb-type-of-word and other-type-of-word were the most complex. The interrelated relations among noun-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and adjective-type-of-word were existed. The interrelated relations among adjective-type-of-word, verb-type-of-word and adverb-type-of-word were also existed. As we all know, the important view of cognitive semantics was that people recognized things from concrete to abstract. Thus, the above phenomenon was gained. The nouns and verbs can derive adjective usage, verbs can produce adverb usage, etc. In this way, the relationship regulations between multi-types-of-words were obtained.
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