



RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL CAPACITY OF 4TH GRADE STUDENTS IN FOLK DANCE TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

The teaching of folk dances and dances in the 4th grade is included in the compulsory area of educational content in the Bulgarian school. After conducting an innovative program in the teaching of folk dances, the physical capacity of students were determined by accomplishing seven tests. The study found that dancing exerts a positive effect on the development of children's physical qualities. The correlations between the indicators of physical capacity of students proved the effectiveness of the proposed program.

Key words: 4th grade students, physical capacity, folk dances

INTRODUCTION

The continuous development of society as a result of the scientific and technical processes has a diverse impact on humans. Along with the positive changes, mainly related to the alleviation of manual labor and the improvement of living conditions, adverse changes in the natural surroundings, physical activity reduced to a minimum, and a number of other contemporary issues cause a negative impact on people's wellbeing. As a consequence, constant development and improvement of education as a whole and the system of PE and Sport in school, in particular is imperative.

A gradual introduction of new curricula in all subjects studied in Bulgarian preschools and schools began in the 2016-2017 school year. It was implemented in connection to the adoption and entry into force of the new Law on Preschool and School Education which was promulgated in the State Gazette, issue № 79 of 13.10.2015, in force since 1.08.2016, amended and supplemented, № 98 of 9.12.2016, in force since 1.01.2017, amended, №105 of 30.12.2016, in force since 1.01.2017, amended, №58 from 18.07.2017, in force since 18.07.2017 (1).

The Minister of Education and Science approved new curricula for all grades in accordance with the law: curricula for the 4th grade, approved by order № RD09-5778 of 22.11.2017. For the first time Bulgarian round dances and dances are included as a mandatory material for study, as part of the field of Gymnastics in the program of Physical Education and Sports.

Folk dances are a core component of our spiritual culture. They are closely related to Bulgarian folk song and music. Music is a unifying and organizing moment by its rhythm and metric organization. On the other hand, it evokes pleasant emotions and helps to more fully reveal the dance images and actions. In this regard, the movements themselves in most cases serve as an illustration of a certain melody or its lyrics (2).

The subject of this study concerns the place of rhythmic exercises and dances, as a means of solving the upbringing, educational, and rehabilitation tasks of the educational process in the basic first stage of primary education - 4th grade, as well as their impact on the physical capacity of students.

EXPOSITION

The most significant differences in the new curricula for 1st - 4th grade occur in terms of the curriculum content in the compulsory areas of Gymnastics and Sports Games. The additional

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core element "Dances" from the old curricula is going to be studied now in Gymnastics from first to twelfth grade under the name "Folk Round Dances and Dances" (3).

An essential task of Bulgarian school is "to educate children and youth in the spirit of folk traditions. This requirement is consistent with the new program of aesthetic education, with the new goals of education and upbringing in our country." (4).

Of all arts, the art of dance is the closest one to the physical education. The lesson in physical education is the only one in which students get acquainted with Bulgarian folklore and study Bulgarian round dances and dances. Those dances facilitate the solution of educational, upbringing, and rehabilitation tasks. That determines the place of dances in the system of physical education and classifies them as its main means.

Rhythmic exercises and dances represent a tool that can be successfully used to solve educational, upbringing and rehabilitation tasks in physical education and sports (5).

Expected results from the training in the compulsory field of Gymnastics:

Students should independently, individually and/or in collaboration with others perform general developmental, gymnastic exercises, and exercises in formation, "Danube round dance" and folk dance/round dance, specific to the region, exercises, complexes and combinations according to the individual capacities of people with disabilities. The topics of the curriculum are:

- "Danube round dance";
- Folk dance/round dance, specific to the region.

Dancing fosters physical qualities. Quickness develops through fast and dynamic dances, in which the lasting relationships of the building elements of the movements can be extremely short. The possibility of using extreme or close to the extreme fast pace to perform dance movements ensures development of quickness. In addition, the dances fully comply with the basic principle of developing quickness - repeatability of actions. The instantaneous reaction in order to perform the respective movement develops quickness of the motor reaction. As a result, dancing proves a suitable means of developing quickness.

In most cases, parallel to quickness, general and special endurance are being developed. The increased functioning of the cardiovascular, respiratory and other systems, especially during prolonged performance of dances, creates a favourable ground for the development of endurance. Emotions stimulate the release of more adrenaline, which, carried by the blood, increases carbon metabolism and is a strong booster of heart and muscle activity. The predominant positive emotions in the performance of dances make the drilling desirable and tolerable even in the presence of physical fatigue. Most frequently, dances have a complex effect on the development of those two qualities. Maintaining a certain melody tempo for a certain time and even its increase towards the end, requires the presence of speed endurance. In such cases, some dynamic and very fast dances get closer to the effects of physical exercises with submaximal intensity.

Strength is a physical quality which is, to some extent, also influenced by the performance of dances. The performance of some dances includes squats, kneeling, push-ups, etc., which increase the strength of the lower limbs. Well-known is the effect on the body which occurs with repeated squats, followed by a slight rising and stretching of both legs when performing *rachenica* (a traditional folk dance). In most cases, the qualities developed have a complex manifestation, so strength should not be considered in isolation from the work for quickness and endurance. In dance performances, the degree of muscle tension is mostly moderate and has a dynamic character. The qualities of dexterity, agility, flexibility, etc. can be developed through the dances, albeit relatively (6).

The issue of strength training lacks deep understanding due to insufficient differentiation between the power components. Traditional, as well as innovative exercises can be harnessed to take effect on the final quality result of the pedagogical process (7).

Folk round dances and dances have a multifaceted effect on the psychophysical development of adolescents. Performance of active and varied movements accompanied by music, not only provide a high emotional charge, but also has a positive impact on students' complex motor development and directly affects the activity of the auditory, visual and vestibular analyser (8).

Human abilities represent a complex set of psychophysical personality traits. They are genetically determined because they are based on natural potentialities. However, they can develop in one direction or another. The learning process plays a particularly important role in that development. Motor abilities concern a set of qualities that are manifested through motor activity. Depending on the characteristics and the concrete motor tasks, one or another motor qualities manifest themselves (9).

The main goal of the pedagogue, along with developing student's motor qualities is to increase the physical and mental stability of children and to create lasting interests and habits for playing sports. Therefore, the effectiveness of the system of physical education and sports in school depends to the greatest extent on the constant increase of the competencies of the teachers in physical education as well as the entire management structure. That requires updating the positions of state and public bodies and organizations on the formation of values and orientations in children and youth concerning a conscious, positive attitude towards strengthening their own health and physical improvement (10).

The issue of stimulating the activity of students needs to stay constantly in the field of view of teachers, parents, and methodologists, thereby innovative approaches that take into account the rapidly changing conditions caused by the reforms in education should be sought. To improve learning outcomes, it is necessary to look for the most appropriate balance between work for building motor habits and improving physical performance (11).

According to V. Yordanov, the pedagogical functions of physical education benefit prevention and implementation of acceptable models in the field of dance and its development; they facilitate student – teacher interaction (12).

It is clear from all the arguments presented above, that dance can be used as a means, although not an essential one, for the complex development of certain physical qualities or for maintaining them at a certain level.

METHODOLOGY

Through scrutinising literature sources and summarising pedagogical experience, the present study found that the problems associated with the transition of the core element "Dances" from an additional to a

mandatory area of study "Folk Round Dances and Dances" are not being addressed effectively enough. Ultimately, that reflects on the physical fitness of students and slows down the process of solving educational challenges in the physical education class.

The aim of this study is to determine the physical condition of 4th grade students, to assess their initial physical capacity, to improve their motor skills and physical activity in the physical education and sports class as well as in the sports activities class by applying a specialised program in practice.

Objectives:

- ↳ To conduct a research (based on literary data) on the issues of dance education;
- ↳ To gather information about the physical capacity of 4th grade students;
- ↳ To develop and implement a program of rhythmic exercises, dance movements, and combinations of "Northern (Danube) Round Dance" and "Svishtov Round Dance", to develop movements for adapted physical education (APE) in dance;
- ↳ To draw conclusions and offer relevant recommendations for the practice and training of dance based on the analysis of the obtained experimental data.

The necessary information was gathered with the help of pedagogical observation, discussion and testing of a CONTINGENT of 88 students from 4th grade - 45 girls and 43 boys - from the secondary school "YordanYovkov", Ruse in the 2019/20 school year. Students were tested at the beginning of the school year. After the completion of an experimental program by tools, methods and forms, developed to be implemented in 5 hours in the compulsory field and 5 hours for sports activities, the data concerning the indicators were taken again at the beginning of the second term of the school year.

Sports-pedagogical tests:

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| TEST № 1 | 30 m SPRINT | |
| TEST № 2 | DOUBLE LEG HOP | |
| TEST № 3 | MEDICINE | BALL |
| | THROW | (from 6 to 10 years - 1 kg.) |
| TEST № 4 | 200 m DASH | (shuttle run) |
| TEST № 5 | AGILITY TEST | (T-TEST) |
| TEST № 6 | STEP TEST | TECUMZEE - |
| | General endurance test | |
| TEST № 7 | "FAST FEET" | (AGILITY) |

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Initially, a comparative analysis was performed and the accuracy of performance at the beginning and at the end of the applied program was determined. The consideration of Student's t-test and the respective guarantee probability expressed in percentages is salient and obligatory in the search for statistical correctness.

The indicators of physical capacity and technical preparedness used for evaluating the boys and girls from the groups formed, correspond to the numbers of the tests in the presented tables. They carry information about the special physical qualities of the tested students and were proven to be closely related to the motor activity in dance training.

Table 1 presents the data from the variation analysis of boys' results, and Table 2 presents the girls' results obtained at the beginning of the school year. Of particular interest in the present study are the changes which have occurred in the groups during the training in terms of the studied indicators. Tables 3 and 4 present the results of the tests conducted at the end of the study, for boys and girls, respectively. The significance of the differences at the average

levels of the indicators, the calculated values of Student's t-criterion and the guarantee probabilities are presented in **Tables 5 and 6**.

Mainly special exercises which differ from others in quality are employed in dances. They are close to general developmental exercises, but also have an intense effect on those organs and systems that dominate the performance of specific work.

The test for quickness used is 30m sprint. Its purpose is to monitor the development of children's acceleration and speed. At the beginning of the study, the students showed values of $X = 5.52s$ for boys and $X = 5.86s$ for girls. The high values of the coefficient of variation $V\% = 24.64$ for boys and $V\% = 20.82$ for girls reveal the different abilities of the students.

Although the average values at the end of the test have increased from $X = 5.52s$ to $X = 5.47s$ for the boys, and from $X = 5.86s$ to $X = 5.71s$ for the girls, this difference cannot be accepted as a result of the applied program, because of the values of the Student's t-test of 1.68 for the boys and 1.73 for the girls; and confidence interval $P / t / = 74\%$ for boys and 85% for girls. (**Tables 5 and 6**)

Table 1. Statistical parameters of boys –beginning

№	n	STATISTICAL PARAMETERS					
		X	Sx	V %	X_{max}	X_{min}	R
1	43	5,52	1,36	24,64	5,09	7,74	-2,65
2	43	167	38,19	22,86	182	122	60
3	43	561	134,69	24,01	667	400	267
4	43	47,11	9,58	20,33	42,22	51,23	-9,01
5	43	16,29	3,77	23,14	15,03	22,19	-7,16
6	43	11,42	10,45	23,74	53	37	16
7	43	4,35	0,92	21,14	3,86	4,64	-0,78

An essential condition for achieving and improving a number of rhythmic exercises and steps is the explosive power of the lower limbs. The effort in horizontal plane is measured with the test "Double Leg Hop". The average values of these indicators show that at the beginning and at the end of the study there are no significant differences between the results obtained by both boys and girls (from $X = 167$ cm to $X = 173$ cm and from $X = 141$ cm to $X = 158$ cm).

Strength manifests differently, depending on the concrete motor activity which has to be realised. It's development during the learning

process guarantees the effectiveness of students' actions.

The development of the explosive force of the arms, shoulders and chest muscles during horizontal effort was monitored by means of "Medicine Ball Throw(1 kg) from above" test. An alteration from 561 cm to 584 cm was observed in the group of boys. The difference is 62% statistical probability and Student's t-criteria for dependent samples - 1.58, which does not allow a claim that the alteration is a result from the applied program.

Similar conclusions can be drawn regarding girls' results. That indicator shows positive change. The difference of 36m (between the

initial and final average results) is too small to be significant in terms of statistical reliability - 72%.

Table 2. Statistical parameters of girls –beginning

№	n	STATISTICAL PARAMETERS					
		X	Sx	V %	X _{max}	X _{min}	R
1	45	5,86	1,22	20,82	5,22	6,81	-1,59
2	45	141	31,50	22,34	160	113	47
3	45	547	122,75	22,44	620	470	150
4	45	50,21	12,13	24,16	43,24	60,66	-17,42
5	45	17,28	4,68	27,08	16,65	19,00	-2,35
6	45	54,10	14,17	26,19	66	43	23
7	45	4,59	1,03	22,44	3,52	4,99	-1,47

According to N. Yordanova (13), the priority of physical education in school is to develop general endurance. That means endurance in terms of prolonged work with moderate intensity (power), including functioning of a large part of the muscular apparatus. The differences that occur at the end of the study in both sexes regarding the "200 m Dash" test are positive. The increase of 3.83 seconds for the group of girls, with 95% reliability respectively, is considered to be due to the rhythmic exercises and games included in the curricula, which improve that motor quality. With regard to the same indicator, in the group of boys an increase of 0.14 seconds is observed, which is due to random factors ($t = -1.68$ boys, $P_t = 74\%$).

The high percentage of variation at the beginning of both groups point evidently to the fact that children possess different abilities at the beginning of the study.

T-test is the new proposal in the system for assessing the physical capacity of students. Agility, as a physical motor quality and strength endurance of the lower limbs can be diagnosed by it.

The values of the differences in the boys' and girls' achievements expressed in percentages of statistical reliability are high - 91% and 89%. However, they cannot justify a claim that the teaching of folk dances has influenced those achievements.

Endurance, as a physical motor quality, manifests in daily work and is a functional basis for the harmonious development of the young generation. It helps to withstand more easily exertion during the repetition of round dances and to successfully develop the remaining motor skills.

Table 3. Statistical parameters of boys – end

№	n	STATISTICAL PARAMETERS					
		X	Sx	V %	X _{max}	X _{min}	R
1	43	5,47	1,11	20,29	5,11	7,03	-1,92
2	43	173	33,87	19,57	188	134	54
3	43	584	108,33	18,55	720	450	270
4	43	47,25	8,06	17,06	41,28	50,03	-8,75
5	43	15,61	2,68	17,17	15,17	23,00	-7,83
6	43	50,09	10,88	21,72	58	44	14
7	43	3,62	0,57	15,74	3,22	4,03	-0,81

Table 4. Statistical parameters of girls – end

№	n	STATISTICAL PARAMETERS					
		X	Sx	V %	X _{max}	X _{min}	R
1	45	5,71	1,11	19,44	5,11	7,01	-1,90
2	45	158	28,74	18,19	169	136	33
3	45	583	99,63	17,09	630	490	140
4	45	46,38	7,04	15,18	42,32	58,59	-16,27
5	45	16,08	3,04	18,90	16,35	18,69	-2, 34
6	45	58,15	11,74	20,19	61	50	11
7	45	3,92	0,67	17,09	3,76	4,71	-0,95

The requirements for the physical abilities of students increased as a result of the characteristics of folk dances as a play and movement activity. Those requirements include manifestation of meaningful, purposeful, effective, and well-arranged simple or complex movements which are controlled by the mental manifestation of the students' personalities - feelings, emotions, volitional effort, resilience, aspiration, etc. The successful implementation and handling of specific means in the round dances depends to a great extent on the development of endurance as a physical quality. Total endurance is the basis, and endurance associated with multiple repetitions is defined as special endurance.

The general endurance test applied is Tecumsee Step test. Its purpose is monitoring the development of the child's cardio-respiratory system. The step test calculates person's endurance by the use of an index, which allows the comparison of the data obtained from

different students and their mathematical processing. This way, various statistics can be produced and studies can be set out to assess the physical and health status of different groups of people.

The comparison of the data of the two groups - boys and girls - from the beginning and end of the experiment clearly showed a change in the average values of the index representative of the results. For male students it increases from 44.01 to 50.09, and for female students - from 54.10 to 58.15. The change is significant and is confirmed by the corresponding confidence interval $P / t / = 96\%$ for boys and girls. It results from the applied combination of exercises and movements in the curriculum. The result of that test is also positive in terms of reduction of the level of variation and the variability of the groups from 23.74% to 21.72% for boys and from 26.19% to 20.19% for girls which leads to the desired pedagogical outcome - averaging of students' results.

Table 5. Significance of the differences between the average levels. Boys

Test	BEGINNING		END		d	t	Pt
	X	S	X	S			
1	5,52	1,36	5,47	1,11	-0,05	1,68	74 %
2	167	38,19	173	33,87	6	1,76	89 %
3	561	134,69	584	108,33	23	1,58	62%
4	47,11	9,58	47,25	8,06	0,14	-1,68	74%
5	16,29	3,77	15,61	2,68	-0,68	1,90	91%
6	44,01	10,45	50,09	10,88	6,08	3,38	96 %
7	4,35	0,92	3,62	0,57	-0,73	2,39	95 %

In most cases, parallel to general and special endurance, quickness is also being developed. Increased functioning of the cardiovascular, respiratory and other systems, especially during a prolonged performance of dances, creates fertile ground for the development of endurance. Emotional experiences stimulate the release of more adrenaline, which, carried by the blood, enhances carbon metabolism and is a strong booster for the activity of the heart and muscles. Quickness depends on the mobility of nervous processes, the functional state of the analysers, the speed of metabolic processes, the strength of muscle elasticity, age, sex and training.

The "Fast Legs" test (agility) provides information about the presence of fast fibres in the muscles involved in sprinting and shows the potential for rapid movement. Hereditary

factors such as limb length, muscle ligaments, and the proportion of rapidly contracting muscle fibres limit the individual's potential but agility and speed can be improved with proper training. A significant change in the average values concerning both tests and both sexes becomes evident when comparing the data from the beginning and the end of the studied period.

Increased average values for lower limb agility from $X = 4.35$ s to $X = 3.62$ s for boys and from $X = 4.59$ s to $X = 3.92$ s for girls, and a decrease in the values of the coefficients of variation prove that the purposeful use of special preparatory exercises and games reflects on and increases the motor skills of students. The values of the Student's t -test, 2.39 for boys and 3.70 for girls, respectively, confirmed by 95% and 97% Pt suggest that the differences have occurred due to the training.

Table 6. Significance of the differences between the average levels. Girls

Test	BEGINNING		END		d	t	Pt
	X	S	X	S			
1	5,86	1,22	5,71	1,11	-0,15	1,73	85 %
2	141	31,50	158	28,74	17	1,51	59 %
3	547	122,75	583	99,63	36	1,63	72 %
4	50,21	12,13	46,38	7,04	-3,83	2,60	95 %
5	17,28	4,68	16,08	3,04	-1,2	1,77	89 %
6	54,10	14,17	58,15	11,74	4,05	3,38	96 %

The coefficient of variation $V\%$ gives valuable information for establishing the variability of the studied indicators. According to sports statistics, a scattering in the groups up to 10% shows that the studied sample is homogeneous. V values between 10% and 30% point to relatively stable indicators and relative homogeneity of the groups; and a coefficient of variation greater than 30% suggests unstable indicators and inhomogeneity of the sample.

The considerations stated about the values of the coefficients of variation occupying a range of 15 - 20% in the group of girls at the end of the studied period suggest that the desired equalisation of results is achieved. Relative homogeneity in both groups of girls and boys was found at the end of the program.

The conducted comparative analysis allowed the average levels and variability of the studied

signs for girls and boys to be revealed. However, in order to achieve the aim and to solve the tasks of the present study, it is necessary to gain deeper understanding of the structure of physical capacity, technical preparedness, mental qualities of students, as well as to reveal the most important relationships in each of the studied correlations. A simple linear Pearson correlation is applied. All the information from the revealed interdependencies between the studied populations, at the beginning and the end of the pedagogical research is presented in special correlation matrices - № 1 - group of boys at the beginning; № 2 - group of boys at the end; № 3 - group of girls beginning; № 4 group girls end. The large number of relationships complicates their analysis, which requires in the correlation structural models to be presented only those in which the strength of

the dependence is higher than 0.30, i.e, those considered significant.

In the interpretation of the models and particularly in the analysis of the presented intercorrelations, besides the sign r , the direction of increase of the individual indicators

must be taken into account. A fact that shouldn't be overlooked is that one-way relationships between the same type of indicators point to significant positive dependencies, while the same relationships between different indicators (with different growth direction) prove existence of negative relationships.

Correlation matrix №1 dependence of the study indicators. Boys, beginning

№	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1	-0,27	-0,18	0,25	0,19	-0,15	0,22
2		1	0,27	-0,21	-0,22	0,28	-0,20
3			1	-0,23	-0,22	0,23	-0,28
4				1	0,23	-0,34	0,11
5					1	-0,29	0,21
6						1	-0,27
7							1

The analysis shows that the statistical dependence between the studied indicators of physical capacity at the beginning of the experiment for the group of boys is 1 and in the second measurement it is also 1. A moderate dependence is visible between Tests 4 and 6, initially with value $r = -0.34$ which proves relationship between endurance (200m Dash

test) and the frequency and endurance of the lower limbs. A moderate dependence with an altered value up to $r = -0.46$ is prominent in Tests 4 and 6 at the end of the experiment.

The same interpretation is relevant about the correlation dependence that occur between the indicators for girls.

Correlation matrix №2 dependence of the study indicators. Boys, end

№	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1	-0,17	-0,21	0,26	0,14	-0,25	0,24
2		1	0,22	-0,19	-0,27	0,25	-0,21
3			1	-0,20	-0,24	0,23	-0,27
4				1	0,23	-0,40	0,18
5					1	-0,29	0,23
6						1	-0,26
7							1

Correlation matrix №3 dependence of the study indicators. Girls, beginning

№	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1	-0,20	-0,21	0,24	0,19	-0,22	0,25
2		1	0,21	-0,20	-0,18	0,24	-0,21
3			1	-0,21	-0,28	0,26	-0,20
4				1	0,19	-0,39	0,40
5					1	-0,24	0,22
6						1	-0,25
7							1

Two moderate connections were found at the beginning - between the tests 200 m Dash and Test Tecumsee and 200 m Dash and Fast Legs test, with values $r = -0.39$ and $r = 0.40$. Significant relationships occur again between

indicators 4 and 5; and 4 and 6 at the end of the study. Retaining of moderate dependence is observed in the first case with value $r = -0.49$. In the second case an increase from moderate to significant correlation ($r = 0.52$) is reported.

The successful work with girls showed that the experiment has led to a more complex development of motor skills – the significant relationship between endurance and agility and the speed of the lower limbs (the specific of the Fast Legstest).

A larger number of dependencies are prominent in the group of girls. The improvement of girls'

physical abilities is confirmed by the value of the coefficient r , which increases at the end of the experiment.

The developed and applied programs of exercises and games for mastering the basic elements and steps of the round dances gave results both in the classroom activity and in the classes for sports activities.

Correlation matrix №4 dependence of the study indicators. Girls, end

№	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1	-0,23	-0,28	0,22	0,18	-0,19	0,25
2		1	0,22	-0,26	-0,22	0,23	-0,19
3			1	-0,23	-0,22	0,18	-0,20
4				1	0,23	-0,49	0,52
5					1	-0,27	0,24
6						1	-0,19
7							1

CONCLUSION

It can be stated that during the implementation of the curriculum a significant increase occurred in the level of all studied indicators in both groups - boys and girls. The most significant changes occurred in terms of the level of agility, frequency of movements of the lower limbs and endurance. The achieved high results are due not only to the physical development of students, but also to the pedagogical process of teaching folk dances.

Certain stabilisation of the indicators for both groups was observed after the end of the experiment. They retain their relative homogeneity in terms of physical properties.

The differences observed at the end of the experiment were confirmed with a high guarantee probability in three of the studied indicators for girls and two for boys. Evidently, this is due to successful choice of tools, methods and their combination, reflected in the proposed new curriculum.

The most significant correlations were found in the endurance indicator in the studied groups of both sexes which is a confirmation that the applied curriculum in dance training predominantly develops that motor quality.

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