

Negotiations of university students with specific learning disabilities with the persons in the academical community.

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ABSTRACT : The abstract focused on the investigation of negotiations of university students with autism and specific learning disabilities, the organization of individual study, calculation times in concentration of attention and the discrimination of memory reading abilities. It aims to examine those metacognitive skills that facilitate both the individual method of studying courses and negotiating the specifics emphasize in the ways of personal learning from the lectures and laboratories. Recently, the teaching of metacognitive skills is prove another specialized education which it is developed in the field of tertiary special education. Data were collected from two studies of university students with autism, during the period [October 2019 - April 2024], at two universities, with individual sessions with certain special education and training [SET] protocols. In these cases, we are investigated if and how the pedagogical guidance contributes to the development of skills of awareness of the individual method of study, learning and problem-solving strategies. The results confirmed the specific learning difficulties of university students with autism in negotiating with the persons of the university community. Finally, the implementations of strategies in the educational process demonstrate the importance of metacognition for the progress of students and the development of logical thinking.

KEYWORDS - autism, metacognition, skills, negotiations, university students

I. INTRODUCTION

The Metacognitions[1] are defined by reflections on the content of thoughts, knowledge about individual awareness or ignorance, basic strategies for linking new information to pre-existing knowledge and planning and control and appreciation of the thought process. The nature of the problem is defined into the university students with autism[2] who exhibit peculiarities in thinking[3] that are often expressed in obsessive thoughts and behaviors. The previous research works, almost since the beginning of the 20th century, discuss about the knowledge of the function of thought with emphasis the metacognition and reading in normally developing readers and readers with dyslexia[4]. Also discussed the evidence from autism and the consciousness of the physical and the mental pain[5]. The effort to understand the structure of the human mind, as the description of function the "reading the mind in the eyes" with normal adults, and adults with Asperger syndrome or high-functioning autism [6] has theoretical value and demonstrate the "integrative implications of the knowledge-and-appraisal of personality[7]. Beyond this, has been of concern to the scientists active[1] in the interdisciplinary research field of special education and training [SET][8]. This provides valuable practical application in pedagogical interventions[9] that help improve the cognitive development of individuals with autism[10].

The contribution of the paper on the metacognitive skills support every creative and critical thinker, such as students with autism at the University[11], in their effort to understand and cope with the changes of the world around us. Clarifying the definition of metacognition and separating it from the definition of metacognitive skills is a rather complex task regarding the strategies of individual study[12]. The main characteristic of metacognitive skills is their contribution to the self-awareness of the individual, extremely difficult in cases of people with autism[13]. More generally, any kind of strategy that the individual uses "at will", his proactive attitude in dealing with problems, are called metacognitive skills[14]. The individual study of courses is determined by the student himself and the particularities regarding the requirements of academic programs and the facilities provided by modern technology[15]. However, beyond cognitive functions per se, the term "metacognitive skills" includes pedagogical tools and methodology of special teaching interventions for specific learning difficulties [SpLDs][16] to persons with autism and dyslexia in the tertiary education using the targeted individual structured integrated intervention program (TISIPFS-A/D)[17]. Also, according to the pedagogical principles of Frame of Analytical program of Special Education [FAPSE] and according to the

psychological meanings, the metacognitive skills of the university students approached regarding emotions, motivations, and awareness of the individuals and it concerns the internal states which have the ability to control them [18].

The present study aims to examine these metacognitive skills that facilitate both the individual method of study of courses and the negotiation of particularities in two studies of students with autism. Data were collected during the period [October 2019 - April 2024], in two Universities, with individual sessions with certain special education and training [SET] protocols. The basic hypothesis investigated factors that constitute the problem around the difficulty of students with autism "to talk" and negotiate with professors and fellow students about the specific learning difficulties that they realize hinder them in their individual study method. Possible differentiation factors in negotiation were also examined in relation to the courses of study and the academic curriculum they attend.

II. PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES [SPLDS] FOR THE UNIVERSITY

All the students according the Ministry of Education, Sports and Religious Affairs and the Department A of the Directorate of Examinations and Certifications, enter tertiary education through the procedure recommended in the circulars for the Panhellenic examinations [19]. This procedure is in no way linked to the provisions concerning the admission of candidates with serious diseases in Tertiary Education. It is noted that special learning difficulties [SpLDs] at the University through Student Welfare, are redefined at the request of the student for facilities in the examinations of the courses. Through the evaluation reports - opinions on the issues, for which the Centers for Interdisciplinary Evaluation, Counseling and Support, which in Greek language called with the acronym (KEDASY) have exclusive competence, the certificates are issued. Furthermore, Student Welfare, along with the requests, accepts the evaluation reports-opinions, decisions, certificates, certificates for SpLDs issued by the Educational and Counseling Support Centers, which in greek called with the acronym(KESY), the Disability Certification Centers, which in greek called with the acronym (KEPAs), the Higher Health Disability Certification Committees, the Community Mental Health Centers for Children and Adolescents, the Mental Health Centers, the Children's Development Center as "Michalino" of the Social Welfare Center of the Attica Region, the Medical and Pedagogical Services of the Center for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind, which in greek called with the acronym (KEAT) or the National Institute of the Deaf. According to the current legal framework, candidates with disabilities and special educational needs are examined orally or in writing, depending on the possibilities, they are examined in a separate room and their examination time may be extended up to 30 minutes.

The circular states that the oral examination occurs because they are unable to take a written examination and because they have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, illegibility, dysspelling or have autism spectrum disorders. This proposal for the oral examination method is indicated in the opinion of the Centers for Interdisciplinary Evaluation, Counseling and Support (KEDASY). Note that this proposal does not bind teachers to the evaluate students only orally. As stated in the same circular of the candidates for the Panhellenic exams students with special learning difficulties (dyslexia, dysgraphia, illegibility, dysspelling) mainly face difficulties in managing the written language and in the spontaneous production of written and flowing speech (e.g. difficulties in reading long texts, inconsistencies in correct writing and syntax, ignoring accent and punctuation symbols, etc.). That is why they are assessed by oral tests. They have, of course, the right, during the preparation stage of the topic, to use a draft, where they will record their thoughts and then develop their answers orally. They often have difficulties concentrating and concentrating attention and are absorbed by background noises (hallway talk, noisy mobility, etc.). For this reason, invigilators help students with prompts to concentrate and keep time and ensure the undisturbed flow of the process.

It is also recommended during the evaluation and grading of science courses to evaluate knowledge, development of rationale and strategic solution of problems beyond computational and managerial difficulties (e.g. numeracy) that are part of the difficulties of students with SpLDs. In these circular, it is referred also, that *"Students who experience SpLDs of the dyscalculia type, often fail to use symbols and signs. In order not to spend all their time in the wrong direction, it can be indicated with a general exhortation to pay attention to symbols and signs. If a graph is required in the answer to a question and the candidate is unable to write, The examiner may draw the graph at the suggestion of the examinee. When the examinee is asked to answer topics such as History, Biology, etc., if the examiner finds that the examinee is unable to render the subject under examination with continuous speech, he can examine him by asking questions, which will facilitate the formulation of knowledge, but should not be of such a form as to indicate the answer. If during the preparation of the topics or during the examination the examinee asks for the reading of a topic, then the invigilator or the examiner respectively could repeat the reading of a topic one more time. During the evaluation – marking it is recommended that candidates consult in particular the notes on their clipboard. In the case of candidates with dyslexia or dysspelling and except in the case of grammar exercises, spelling errors are not taken into account.*

It should be noted that the special treatment of examinees does not in any way constitute a lenient assessment or any other form of special treatment, but only aims to provide them with the opportunity to externalize knowledge, which due to their condition they are unable to externalize through the written word". The presence in the Committee of the Special Education and Integration Education Advisor or the Head of the relevant KEDASY or the Secondary Education teacher who serves in KEDASY, is appropriate for the provision of clarifications or explanations on issues of special educational needs, when requested by the Committee.

III. THE TRAINING PROGRAM IN METACOGNITIVE SKILLS FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

The educational program utilizes interdisciplinary assumptions about metacognition and the systematic effort to cultivate metacognitive skills in teaching and learning. It is a more permanent and lasting type of learning and makes students of any age independent, producers of knowledge, investing in future development. As far as students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) are concerned, it is assumed that they have acquired certain metacognitions by being students who affect their cognitive functions. We can distinguish two metacognitive aspects, the "theoretical" and the "practical". "Theoretical" refers to the knowledge a person has about the knowledge or information they possess. In other words, what the person knows or don't know. The "practical" aspect refers to the mechanisms of knowledge production. That is, the knowledge that the individual has about the ways in which university student can draw knowledge from the environment, retain it and use it. Example from the metacognition from the three-hour assessment they have previously undergone as candidates for the University. According to it, routines desired by people with ASDs are allowed and do not violate the general regulations (eg a specific object on the desk or a specific position in relation to lighting, etc.). But also the care to avoid stimuli that disturb people with ASDs to concentrate and concern their particular functionality in terms of their senses (noises or conversations in the background of the room, avoidance of eye contact, changes in lighting, etc.). The training program in metacognitive skills for university students with autism utilizes metacognitions from assessment and grading given that they need very specific and predictable procedures that help in their maximum performance (e.g. they may ask to stand or sit more sideways, they may be disorganized by persistent gaze, may need to consult their writing). The questions addressed by university teachers need to be short and specific, given in shorter periods and avoid general questions – observations. Motivational questions need to be addressed at each stage of the course assessment and there should be a short waiting or silence time for the student to answer. Characteristic metacognition is the accompaniment by a special education teacher as was the case when students are accompanied by a Parallel Support teacher, in order to achieve the familiarity they need. The need for the formulation of certain metacognitive skills is also highlighted for the accompanying teachers who support university students with ASDs with individual sessions without interfering, explaining, helping the examined student but being able to support him/her with the visual indicators they have established among themselves in order to achieve cooperation. It should be noted that the differentiated procedure provided for in the oral evaluation of the course does not constitute in any way a lenient assessment or any other form of special treatment, but aims only at enabling these students with ASDs to externalize knowledge, which due to their autism condition they are unable to externalize with the written word.

In individual university sessions with certain dates with students with ASDs among the topics of discussion such as: [a] Scheduling of spring courses and [b] Individual study method, "Training in metacognitive skills" is included with certain criteria, which are listed immediately after.

[1st criterion: Time-space] describing the number, the name of lessons the type of teaching as [lab] laboratory and [th] theory and the oration with the day, time and Room of lectures.

[2nd criterion] describing the difficulty in understanding the lectures of lessons into the linear continuum with numbers [1-9], as small:1-3, medium:4-6 large: 7-9.

[3rd criterion] describing the individual study method regarding the use of university book, of e-class-professors' notes, of university student notes [handwritten-electronic] and with physical presence in the lectures.

[4th criterion] describing the feelings about the study, as positive, negative, indifferent, and as disoriented.

[5th criterion: Time-space] describing the procrastination into the linear continuum with numbers [1-10] and is declared often with absences in the morning classes lectures.

[6th criterion: Time-space] describing the degree of concentration of attention in particular time and room of lesson, into the linear continuum with the numbers [1-10].

[7th criterion: Time-space] describing the ways of examining the lesson as through physical presence, the facilities in written exams regarding progresses[1], group work[2], individual work[3], at the end multiple choices[4], topic development [5]- and the portfolio of issues study [6] alongside the orality.

[8th criterion:] describing the negotiation of SpLDs with the university teacher. Where the university student acts with certain steps.

- 1st step: oral negotiation, where he/she comes in person and discusses the SpLDs, stating that he/she has ASDs and supports me with individual university sessions, before the exam schedule comes out.

-2nd step: written negotiation, where a certain text is sent by email from the student with ASDs to the teacher. In it, the details of individuality are stated [name, registration number, course, student welfare document for facilities during the examination process], in which the name of the special educator accompanying the university student to the individual study is.

IV. CASE STUDIES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH SPLDS DUE TO AUTISM.

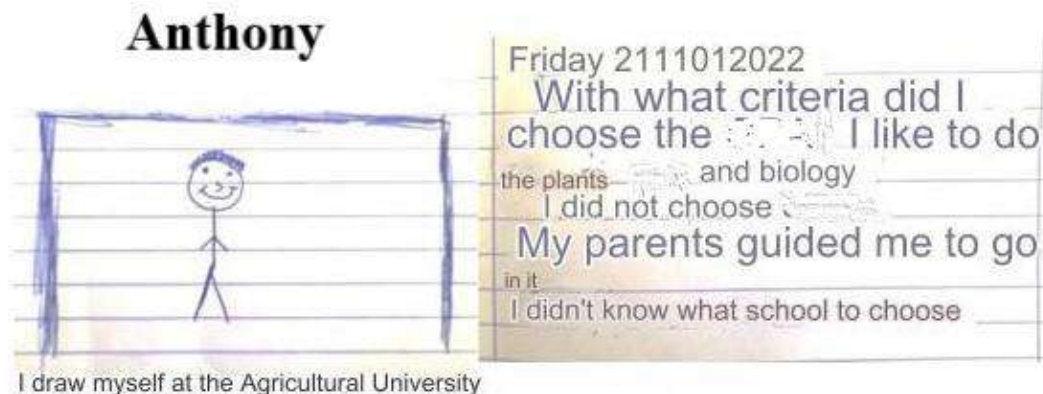
The present study presents two case studies of students with special learning difficulties due to autism with the academic community where they negotiate with the teaching professors. They are a 26-year-old student from the Agricultural University of Athens and a 25-year-old student from the University of Peloponnese based in Kalamata. Both students have been diagnosed with ASD and have received 67% disability from the Center for Disability Certification and concealed their SpLDs to professors and fellow students on the pretext of inability to negotiate and communicate. The individual sessions took place during the period [October 2019 - April 2024], with certain SET protocols applying the methodology of observation and intervention of specific learning disabilities with emphasis on autism. The methodology is included in the pedagogical tool and is stated by the acronym T.I.S.D.I.P.S.E.T. as a targeted, individual, structured and differentiated, didactic, inclusive program of special education interventions with emphasis on metacognitive skills in higher education [20][21].

The case studies of two students with autism and the negotiations of their specific learning disabilities with the teaching professors.

First case study. It's about Anthony [fictional name], young woman.

According to the pedagogical principle of individuality, the request for advisory support is presented in the way of managing the study of the courses of the 3rd semester university faculty, stating the personal opinion on the characteristics of individual difficulties - succinctly. *"I would like to mention to you that I am disabled. I have a diagnosis of Pervasive Developmental Disorder and a certificate of disability with a percentage of 67%. The corresponding supporting documents have been submitted to the department's secretariat since October. Making use of the rights given to me by law [22] on accessibility for all persons, due to your institutional role, I appeal to you for support due to the serious dysfunctions I face as a result of my developmental disorder. I encounter great difficulty in following and recording notes at the same time, resulting in feeling insecure about their correctness. Also, my inherent social-emotional difficulties prevent me from the obvious for the rest of you, such as asking for help when I can't respond to something. Therefore, I ask the Assembly of the Department to inform the lecturers about the objective difficulties I face and which hinder my academic activity. In addition, I strongly ask you to ensure that the teachers integrate me into groups of students, something that I cannot achieve on my own, so that I have the necessary cognitive, but mainly social-emotional support from my peers."*

In the context of our individual meetings, [N=20] individual sessions have been held with physical presence, [N=80] remotely with telelessons, in the context of group workshops of mnemonic techniques Anthony has attended [N=10] with physical presence and [N=10] remotely. In those with the heteroobservations recorded skills in oral speech has satisfactory expression. As she mentions in elementary school, she did speech therapy for two years, and went to an integration class. In high school, she did only a group intervention program with a psychologist. In the Panhellenic exams, Anthony was examined orally as a candidate student with special educational needs and specifically ASD. In psychomotricity she is right-handed, does not want to get a license in the car, sometimes plays with the mobile inside the class. In mental abilities she has difficulty understanding mathematics, exercises and physics and some biology exercises. Anthony finds it difficult to sit down to read without getting up for a phone, toilet, food, a walk for an hour. She gets up every 10-15 minutes. In the emotional organization proudly states that she is firstborn, she does not have a boy, although he would like to. Anthony doesn't like watching TV, reading extracurricular books, but she likes photography and riding a bike.



The intervention plan focused on the "Organization of individual study in lessons". The number and description of courses changed from semester to semester. The training in metacognitive skills included exercises following interactive discussions about the necessity and meaning of negotiating one's difficulties with others. For example, in the winter semester she had to negotiate with professors in 13 courses, stating that these are 8 theories and 5 workshops. In the winter semester she also negotiated her successes and failures which were summed up in the report with the phrases [a] I passed 6 out of 13, [b] I went to 11 from the 13, [c] I got cut in 7 out of 13 courses. Here is an excerpt from the discussion around metacognition in the biochemistry class that went to the exam and was cut. *'It was examined on Tuesday 9 FEBRUARY, 10.00-11.00. She had rated it with a medium degree of difficulty in comprehension [5 out of 9], preferred to read it from the notes in the teacher's e-class, excluded the study from the book because, as she stated, it is large and difficult to read'*. In the lectures she noted that had made several absences because she cannot wake up, but also because physical presence is not mandatory.

She stated that she has attended 5 out of 13 classes in the auditorium, procrastination was calculated 8 out of 10 and was characterized as great, the degree of concentration was calculated 6 out of 10. She considered development questions with more time, after further exploring the evaluation she requested in the written negotiation by email. She refused to conduct oral negotiation[23], stating that the professor is never in his office. She attributed her failure to the reason that she reads with a parrot, makes whispered reading outside.

The results of the negotiations highlighted the difficulty of "recording" the mnemonic difficulties as in Chemistry, which has difficulty remembering terminology. Exercises with study times and degree of concentration of attention were discussed, in order to understand these difficulties herself and negotiate them with her teachers represented in a table of metacognitive skills in individual study in the course Chemistry. She is recording the frequency number -the times of the individual study, the date of study, the start time, the end time and the duration of the study for a particular course regarding the steps:

- Step 1. Recording with your mobile phone, the reading aloud using the auditory memory,
- Step 2. Listening to what she has read by watching her sources from the e-clas, university book in notes,
- Step 3. The measurement of continuous study- not less than 60 minutes.
- Step 4. Calculation of the degree of concentration of attention from 1 less to 10 the greatest.

Second case study. It's about John [fictional name] young man.

According to the pedagogical principle of individuality, the request for counseling support is presented in the way of managing the study of the courses of the Department of Philology with an opinion from the Center for Certification of Disability for Autism 67%. Personal opinion on the characteristics of individual difficulties is summarized as having difficulties in memory, spelling, writing assignments, states that he has difficulty sitting down to read, has difficulty concentrating for an hour and reading undistracted, confuses hours with exam days, needs more time to answer orally in written exams, takes notes from other students, refuses to write.

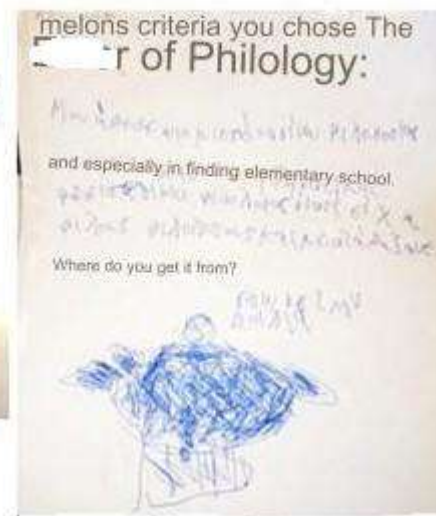
In the heteroobservations it is recorded, in the neurodevelopmental area of learning readiness in oral speech that it presents satisfactory expression, states that from the age of two years old, he underwent speech therapy until the fifth grade he had difficulty articulating the Greek phonemes as $[\theta, \delta, \rho]$. He had professors of philology at home, they "read" him from the first grade of primary until now that he is at university who has a professor every weekend. The admission grade was 12,985[with excellent the 20,000] for the entry in the university. In the neurodevelopmental area of the psychomotricity, he is left-handed, does not drive a car, does not play a musical instrument, port wears headphones and a cap, and walks with clumsy movements. In mental abilities he has difficulty reading, he is easily distracted, he cannot combine two activities together, that is, he listens and writes, he came with oral exams from general high school. In emotional organization he states that *"I am a kind child, I don't have a girlfriend yet. My parents are divorced. I go back and forth by bus, alone. We argue with dad about property. I don't read extracurricular books. I like cinema and watch crime movies and more. I played basketball in third grade. We were not treated well. They were a little reproachful towards us. I like food."* The Department of Philology was his first choice, which he obsessively declares as his preference. He does not take medication despite having changed more than five psychiatrists and has been hospitalized.

John

fifth of December 2022



What criteria did you use to choose the literature department?



As part of the discussions as his academic advisor, individual SET' sessions were held, [N=50] in person and [N=50] remotely with telesessions. The description of the Individual study method is carried out with physical presence in classes and with a teacher at home on weekends. John goes once a week to the Day Center for psychosocial rehabilitation and professional reintegration. It is a program "Psychargos" from the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity, with collaborating bodies the psychiatric hospital of city he live with a plan of hostels and protected apartments. Its objectives include the development and strengthening of individual and social skills of members in order to enhance their self-esteem and autonomy. The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life of the recipients of the Day Center's services, supporting their integration into social processes.

The negotiations of the university student with autism included addressing the specific learning difficulties in the academic community, with the awareness of what he attends and happens daily in classes with continuous educational care of special needs in collaboration with the family -mainly with the mother- in order to reduce the burden[21]. So gradually he started using the mobile phone to write, take notes and send emails[23].

The negotiations also included communicating with fellow students by raising awareness and educating the academic community to combat the stigma about mental illness, preventing marginalization and social isolation. Also, John participated in excursions, conferences despite initial reactions in the first year from students who often stated that they were threatened by the presence of the strange fellow student.

V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the negotiations of university students with specific learning disabilities with the persons in the academical community emphasize in the metacognitive cognition and metacognitive regulation of two students with autism in their academic work, and their individual study method. First of all, there are different types of learning behavioral regulation were observed in it, such as individual introverted method of study, which is -identified and intrinsic regarding the ASDs. The learning to learn skills training program had an impact on awareness and self-regulation of the place of learning, self-assessment, performance expectations by controlling preparation in study and then performance in the courses of each semester. The results showed that students used metacognitive knowledge mainly in statements and metacognitive regulation in programming to a moderate degree. The metacognitive exercises helped them shape normative forms of learning, with an emphasis on the intrinsic and SpLDs regarding the individuality of autism.

The first conclusion seems that the negotiations of students with specific learning difficulties due to autism with the academic community take place following their candidacy as people with special educational needs in the Panhellenic examinations with oral exams at their request with the student welfare. In both cases of university students with autism, the training of metacognitive skills "taught person one by one" the negotiation techniques that remove their inhibitions and their emotional barriers. Also, helped them "to speak" themselves and express themselves in front of others about the obstacles which come from SpLDs and supported them to face in the individual study method without mediators, as it has been happening with the parallel support teachers in the secondary classes. In the individual SET sessions, university students were trained in metacognitive skills that accept the particularities of students with autism for orality in their answers to the course topics, with more time during the development of the answers, but also with the possibility of being able

to consult their notes. In particular, in the case of the philology student, spelling and syntax errors are not taken into account. During the preparation of the study of the topics, in the negotiations, the students asked the professors to further clarify how the course was examined and evaluated. It should be noted that the differentiated procedure that provides for oral assessment and grading does not in any way constitute lenient assessment or any other form of special treatment, but only aims to enable these students with autism to externalize knowledge, which due to their condition they are unable to declare exclusively through the written word.

Moreover, the second conclusion showed that university students' difficulties in negotiating do not depend primarily on the departments of study and the academic curriculum they attend. They mainly concern their functionality on the autistic spectrum, the awareness of their individual study method and the organization of the time they have to study the courses in which they are examined for their cognitive proficiency in them. Further theoretical and practical applications of the findings are clearly required.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel the need to thank the university students who trusted me and shared with me their difficulties and cooperated with their demand to help themselves to learn how to learn.

VII. ACRONYMS

1. Framework for Analytical Programs of Special Education (FAPSE)
2. Special education and training [SET]
3. Specific learning disabilities [SpLDs]
4. Targeted Individual Structured Integrated Programs for Special Education and Training [TISIPofSET]
5. Autism Spectrum Disorder [ASD]

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