Reduplication in Urhobo and English

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Abstract
This study comparatively analyses reduplication in Urhobo and English. Reduplication in morphology is a word-formation process that repeats a base as a whole or part to form a w, ord. The study reviews types of reduplication, such as total reduplication, involving a complete repetition of the base word, and partial reduplication, involving copying part of the base word. The paper adopts morphological doubling theory for the study analysis. To achieve the aim of this study, data are gathered from selected competent speakers of Urhobo and analysed in comparison with English reduplication. The paper finds that Urhobo and English reduplications are similar as both possess total and partial reduplication. The paper also finds that while both languages possess partial reduplication, the Urhobo language forms partial reduplication through the addition of prefixes and suffixes, which function as modifiers, qualifiers and plurals; English, on the other hand, does not rely on reduplication to change modifiers and qualifier.

Key Words: Morphology, Reduplication, English, Urhobo.

Introduction
　　　　Language is defined as a system that involves developing, acquiring, maintaining and using complex communication systems, particularly human ability. Lado (1950) posits that language is primarily an instrument of communication among human beings. In addition to its communicative use, language signifies group identity, social stratification, social grooming, and entertainment. Every human being is endowed with a language acquisition device (LAD), which makes learning a language easy for each user. Ndimele (1992) states that "human languages are unique and share certain similarities in creativity, arbitrariness, cultural transmission, duality, displacement and constancy". Language thus helps man and his environment. Language has characteristics and properties that a learner must be acquainted with or acquire before claiming mastery of a language. The English language co-exists with other languages, such as the Urhobo language. A user of both languages – English and Urhobo – would need to become acquainted with aspects of these languages and their similarities and contrasts not only to master but to make proper usage of both languages. One aspect of language that possesses similarities and contrasts between English and Urhobo is reduplication.

　　　　Reduplication is a word-formation process that involves copying some part of a base (a segment, syllable, or morpheme) or even the whole base. The term "reduplicant" refers to the copied part of a word, while the term "base" refers to the root to which the reduplication process applies (McCarthy & Prince, 1995; Adiza & Emama, 2024; Emama, 2024). Rubino (2005) defines reduplication as the systematic repetition of phonological material within a word for semantic or grammatical purposes. Reduplication is a subtype of repetition, a pervasive phenomenon in every language affecting all linguistic units, such as sounds, words, and phrases. It is a formal operation whereby part of the base or the complete base is copied and attached to it (Haspelmath, 2002). Kiyomi (1995) provides an analogy for defining reduplication when he says that "given a word with a phonological form X, then reduplication refers to XX or xX (where x is part of X and x can appear either just before X, just after X, or inside X). Conditions: (i) XX or xX must be semantically related to X. (ii) XX or xX must be productive." Reduplication is thus a productive word-formation process across languages. While reduplication is observed in a wide range of languages, its level of linguistic productivity varies (Ghomeshi et al., 2004; Marantz, 1982). The patterns of reduplications and

productivity in different languages have necessitated the comparative analysis of reduplication in English and Urhobo.

Statement of the Problem

As various languages exist worldwide, they all share universal properties that connect them. However, while there are similarities, there also abound contrast in varieties of human languages. Language is an important phenomenon in human existence; it binds communities together. To communicate, humans use words which are formed through morphology. Among the processes in which these words are formed is reduplication. While reduplication is present in all languages, the contrast exists in how different languages reduplicate words. This research seeks to add knowledge by investigating the similarities and differences in reduplication in English and Urhobo languages.

Methodology

The sources of data for the study constitute both primary and secondary sources. The primary data sources are collected from competent speakers of Urhobo through oral interviews and recordings. The primary data for the study are gathered from two communities – Agbarho and Abraka. The oral interview process used for the data collection did not include questionnaires but direct dialogue with the interviewees. The selected individuals are those who share at least a reasonable competence in the English language and a very high competence in the Urhobo language. Some of the data selected from the oral interviews were then translated to create an easy understanding of these Urhobo words for analysis. The translators were selected from the individuals used for the oral interviews.

The researcher used recording as another method of collecting data. The Urhobo communities where the participant observation was collected also served as the domain for the recordings. The instrument used was a mobile phone. These recordings were made while listening to or participating in conversations. This made it easier for the translators, who then transcribed and translated these data, some of which were unclear during the recording.

Theoretical Framework

This study compares reduplication in two languages – English and Urhobo. The study is framed on Morphological Doubling Theory. Inkelas and Zoll (2005) developed the Morphological Doubling Theory as an alternative reduplication theory involvingvolve phonological copying. The Theory is based on the principle that reduplication is viewed as the double (or multiple) occurrences of a morphological constituent meeting a particular morphosemantic description (Inkelas (2005). In Morphological Doubling Theory, the morphology generates reduplicant and base as part of a construction that also embodies semantic and phonological generalisations about the output of reduplication. The units involved are morphological constituents, which are spelt out independently, resulting in the appearance of copying. Sometimes, one or more units involved may be subject to independent phonological modification. This Theory guides the study as it helps to analyse the similarities and contrasts in the reduplication of both English and Urhobo.

Literature Review

In comparing two languages, contrastive analysis is used to identify their structured differences and similarities. Contrastive analysis was used extensively in second language acquisition in the 1960s and early 1970s to explain why some features of a target language were more difficult to acquire than others (Ellis, 1994). According to Ulla (1996), some contrastive linguists believe language learning is a problem and a question of habit formation that existing habits could reinforce or impede. Therefore, the difficulty in mastering certain structures in a second language (L2) depended on the difference between the learner's mother tongue (L1) and the language

they were trying to learn. The theoretical foundations for what became known as the contrastive analysis hypothesis were formulated in Lado's *Linguistics Across Cultures (1957).* In his book, Lado claimed that "those elements which are similar to the learner's native language will be simpler for him and those elements that are different will be difficult". Lado was the first to suggest a systematic set of technical procedures for the contrastive study of languages. That involved describing the languages, comparing them, and predicting learning difficulties and solutions. This comparison is the crux of this research.

The English language is the most used in the world today. English began in England when Germanic tribes (Saxons, Angles and Jutes) came from Northern Germany and Southern Scandinavia to Britain from around 449AD. The word "English" comes from the name of the Angles. The English language has undergone stages. There are three broad distinguishable stages: Old English, Middle English and Modern English. Old English was used until around 900AD; Middle English lasted till between 1060 and 1500. It gradually gave way to Modern English. Britain was the original home of the English language. English is the primary language of most people in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, other former colonies of Britain and territories of the United States. It is generally accepted that the English language is a world language.

The Delta State speech community is made up of different ethnic groups, including Urhobo. According to Osakwe (2005), the diverse ethnocultural background was genial for the continued stay of English, especially in metropolitan communities such as Warri and Sapele, where it served as the lingual franca. Despite the advent of the pidgin language in Delta State, English remains the language of formal education in school.

Urhobo is a South West Edoid language [Benue-Congo, Niger-Congo] spoken in Delta State, Nigeria, in the south-south geopolitical zone (Elugbe, 1989). Population estimates range from approximately 500,000 (Lewis, 2009) to 1.5 million (Mowarin, 2004). The Urhobo people also have a significant diaspora population. The earliest documentation on Urhobo is in the 1828 word list by Hannah Kilham, as spoken by a formerly enslaved person in Freetown, Sierra Leone (Kilham, 1979). Two small dictionaries have been produced in the language, according to Usobele (2001). Several articles have been written mostly for journals with earlier commitments to West Africa. Urhobo contrasts seven vowel qualities. Each vowel has oral and nasal counterparts. Vowel length is not contrastive, and no distinctive phonation type exists. Vowels may occur in word-initial or word-final positions. Phonetic diphthongs exist but are restricted. We can, therefore, understand Urhobo as contrasting 14 vowel phonemes. Urhobo Vowels are: /i ĩ/, /u ũ/, /e ẽ/, /o õ/, /ɛ ɛ̃/, /ɔ ɔ̃/, /a ã/.

According to Aziza (2008), Urhobo, a South Western Edoid language of the Niger-Congo family, is spoken in Delta State, Nigeria. In the synchronic phonology of the language, there are seven surface vowels, but the behaviour of some vowels, especially sometimes, is at variance with their expected vowel behaviour, indicating that there may be abstract underlying vowels which have merged. The result, when compared with sister languages such as Degema and Isoko, is that the Urhobo system appears quite complex. At the consonant level, Urhobo has 29 consonantal phonemes. These are: /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /kʲ/, /gʲ/, /k/, /g/, /k͡p/, /g͡b/, /m/, /n/, / ɲ/, /ŋ/, / m̃/, /ɸ/, /f/, /v/, /s/, /ʃ/, /x/, /ɣ/, /d͡ʒ/, /β̞/, /j/, /w/, /l/, /r̥/, /r/.

Reduplication is a productive word-formation process across languages (e.g. Inkelas and Zoll 2005). It is a morphological process involving complex morpho-phonological processes and expressing a complex range of semantic-syntactic senses and functions. According to Aziza (2007), reduplication is a morphological process in which a part or whole of a stem is copied and attached to

the stem. Wang (2005) states that reduplication is a morphological process in which the root or stem of a word or part of it is repeated. He says that in many languages, reduplication is used as inflexion to convey grammatical functions and as lexical derivations to create semantic forms. According to O'Grady, Archibald, and Katamba (2011), reduplication is a common morphological process in some languages. It functions as a grammatical or semantic contrast by repeating all or part of the base to which it applies. Rubino (2005) defines reduplication as the systematic repetition of phonological material within a word for semantic or grammatical purposes.

Inkelas and Downing (2015) assert that reduplication involves doubling some components of a morphological base for some morphological purpose. Unlike other morpheme types, reduplicative morphemes depend for their form on some linguistic property or properties (phonological or morphosemantic properties) of the root, stem, or word, which serve as the base of reduplication. Elsewhere, Marantz (1982) accounts that except that the material attached to the stem in reduplication resembles the stem phonologically, reduplication rules look like normal affixation processes. The author concludes that the one unique feature of reduplication, which leads diverse morphological processes to be grouped under the title reduplication, is the added material's resemblance to the reduplicated stem.

Rubino (2005) contends that reduplication is a widely used morphological device in a substantial number of languages spanning the globe that consists of systematic repetition of phonological material within a word for semantic or grammatical purposes, while Osubele (2001) considers reduplication as a special case of affixation and therefore assumes reduplication to develop in the same way as affixes do, i.e. via grammaticalisation of former independent lexical items. She considers full reduplication as equivalent to the composition of two lexical items, an idea supported by Pagliuca (1994) and then echoed by Huttar and Huttar (1997) that reduplication means the repeating of all or part of a word (more than a single segment), the result still being a phonological word, with its pitch and stress pattern.

Many linguistic scholars see reduplication as a subtype of repetition, a pervasive phenomenon of every language affecting all types of linguistic units such as sounds, words, and phrases. Reduplication generally subsumes three main areas: the process, the result (new word), and the element. Syntactic and semantic properties are associated with reduplication among languages (Inkelas, 2014). Kim (1997) refers to reduplication as the affixation of a morpheme whose phonological form depends in all or in part on the phonological form of the host stem to which it attaches, to the effect of expressing certain semantic features. Among a wide variety of languages, copying the word base entails generating new semantics of the root, thus causing a change in the meaning of the reduplicated stem or adding new information along with the existing meaning of the basic word (Kiyomi, 1995).

There are two types of reduplication: total and partial reduplication.

i. Total Reduplication: Total reduplication reduplicates the entire constituent. This type of recurrence occurs when morphemes or larger linguistic units are repeated in form and meaning (Ghomeshi et al., 2004; Nadarajan, 2006). It can be done for emphasis, intensity, or clarity in a discourse.
ii. Partial Reduplication: Partial reduplication duplicates some phonologically characterisable subparts. A part of the word is repeated to come up with various forms. Partial reduplication is where there has not been a reduplication of the whole form of the reduplicant but where there have been phonological changes.

There are several functions of reduplications. These are:

i.   Intensity: Reduplicated lexemes may show the intensity of a particular action. It is achieved via full reduplication.
ii. Plurality: Reduplication in many languages is used to show plurality.
iii. Emphasis: This procedure frequently appears with full reduplication.
iv. Contrast: A word is repeated to obtain quite a contrary meaning, usually when the first noun is stressed to indicate a literal idea
v.   Abundance: Reduplication can express the exaggeration of quantity. It is explicitly representative of a derivational morphological process to express an amount of something.

In 2018**,** Gabriel, Emilien, and Léonard researched *Morphological Doubling Theory in Two Bantu Languages: Reduplication: A comparative perspective of Kinyarwanda and Swahili*. In the study, they analyse reduplication in Kinyarwanda and Swahili, both Bantu languages spoken in Rwanda and its neighbouring countries of the East African region. This study aimed to examine the similarities and differences between the two languages. The two languages were compared at the synchronic and diachronic levels to a lesser extent, as the histories of both languages were discussed to a minimal extent to know about their historical background. It was demonstrated that Kinyarwanda and Swahili morphological processes agree with various types of reduplication. They discovered that the languages share full-word, full-stem, partial-stem, and syllabic reduplication features.

Ananda (2019) worked on *Reduplication: Its Types and Functions in Sinhala*. The study examined the reduplication phenomenon in Sinhala in the broader spectrum of reduplication patterns and functions evidenced in many world languages. The study used data which consisted of sentences with reduplication types and functions that can be distinguished in Sinhala. The researcher consulted 5 adult native speakers of Sinhala for their grammatical judgments about the sentences. In terms of the study's main findings, it was concluded that Sinhala employs reduplication in its spoken and written varieties to various degrees and for various effects. The research found that Sinhala used reduplication to fulfil some stylistic functions, which were mostly manifested in poetry, riddles, songs, anecdotes, and narrations. Sinhala also manifests reduplication at phonological, morphological/morpho-syntactic, and lexical levels.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The data for this study are selected Urhobo reduplicated words. The analysis will show the process and results of these reduplicated words and their extraction from the English language. The Urhobo data are divided into three main types of reduplicates: complete reduplicate, partial reduplicate through prefixes and partial reduplicate by suffixes.

Complete Reduplication in Urhobo

Data 1: bọ̀rọ̀bọ̀rọ

	Stem	Reduplication
Urhobo	bọ̀rọ̀	bọ̀rọ̀bọrọ
	| | | |	| | | | | | | |
	cvcv	cvcv cvcv
English	cool	cool, calmly

The above reduplication is a complete form of the base word bọ̀rọ̀, while the reduplicant is also bọ̀rọ̀. When added together to form the reduplication, it becomes bọ̀rọ̀bọ̀rọ̀. Semantically, the

base word means "cool" or "calm", and the reduplicant, which is a total copy of the root word, also means "cool". The reduplication thus maintains the same meaning. This type of reduplication functions to create emphasis. Syntactically, the reduplication changes the initial base word "bọ̀rọ̀" – calm," which is an adjective to an adverb – "bọ̀rọ̀bọ̀rọ̀" – calmly. It is seen that the reduplication maintains the same phonological makeup as it is a complete repetition of the initial base word.

Syllabic Structure: bọ̀rọ̀ bọ̀rọ̀bọ̀rọ̀

| | | | | | | | | | | | |

cvcv cvcv cvcv

As seen from the structure above, the syllabic structure of the base is also carried completely to form the reduplication. The use of complete reduplication in Urhobo is also the same in the English language, such as fifty-fifty. Like in Urhobo complete reduplication, English complete reduplication also possesses the same phonological patterns as the full base is also transferred to the reduplicant.

Data 2: vònvòn

The word vònvòn is reduplicated from the original lexical item "vòn", meaning "full" in English. The word "full" is an adjective in English and Urhobo. In Urhobo reduplication, the lexical item "vòn" is reduplicated as "vònvòn". This is a type of total reduplication as the complete root word is repeated to form the reduplicant. The lexical item "full" is intensified in English by adding an adverbial modifier. However, Urhobo's total reduplication of the lexical item "vòn" to "vònvòn" functions as an intensifier. Thus, there is a total repetition of the stem. The reduplication contains the same phonological component in its syllabic structure.

Syllabic Structure: vòn vònvòn

| | | | | | | |

CVC CVC CV

In the syllabic structure, slight differences exist in combining the base to form the reduplication; Urhobo words end with vowels. As such, the base "vòn" contains a consonant + vowel structure, but when reduplicated, the structure changes as the base word takes a CVC structure. At the same time, the reduplicant maintains its original CV structure. These changes occur because the base no longer ends the word; thus, the consonant is pronounced, but the reduplicant ends the word, rendering the concluding consonant silent.

This is different from English complete reduplication since words can end with both vowels and consonants phonologically; total reduplication does not affect the pronunciations of the base or the reduplicant. While Urhobo and English share similarities, total reduplication differences exist phonologically in some cases. Grammatically, while syntactically, the reduplication functions as an intensifier, such as "vònvòn" is rendered as very full, where the reduplicant serves as a qualifier for the base word.

Data 3: fárhiẹ̀nfárhiẹ̀n

The above data sample is another case of complete or total reduplication. The base word "fárhiẹ̀n" in Urhobo means "be rough, " an adjective. Through reduplication, the lexical item is rendered as "fárhiẹ̀nfárhiẹ̀n" meaning "roughly", which is an adverb. This reduplication shows the

intensity of a person's actions and can also be used to describe the intensity of a place that is unkempt or bad. Semantically, the reduplication mentions the same meaning as the base word. Although syntactically, the word class changes from an adjective in the base word to an adverb when reduplicated. Because of the completeness in the initial word being transferred to form the reduplicant, there is phonological and semantic sameness. Phonologically, the pronunciation of the base word is the same as the reduplicant.

Syllabic Structure: fárhiẹ̀n   fárhiẹ̀n fárhiẹ̀n

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

cvcv   cvcvc   cvcv

rough   roughly

This form of reduplication is common in English as many English words are duplicated through total reduplication, showing both phonological and semantic similitude between the base word and the reduplicant, such as "goody." As seen in Urhobo, complete English reduplication is also used to emphasise sentences. Thus, Urhobo and English share similarities in total reduplication. Phonologically, English also shares the same patterns as Urhobo, forming total reduplication. For example, in English, the reduplication fifty-fifty, housey – housey, shares total phonological sameness as do Urhobo in "fárhiẹ̀nfárhiẹ̀n".

Partial Reduplication: Addition of prefix

Data 4: ògróngrón

	Stem	Reduplication
Urhobo	grón	ògróngrón
	|	|
English	Tall	Tall one

From the above data sample, the initial lexical item is "grón", which means tall in English. The prefix "ògrón" is added to the base word "grón" when reduplicated. In this case of reduplication, the reduplicant is borne out of the need to create clarity as the lexical item changes from "grón" which is an adjective to a noun "ògróngrón" – "tall one" which becomes a noun. Phonologically, there is a change in this reduplication; the initial word "grón" begins with a consonant, but the reduplicant, a prefix, begins with a vowel sound, leading to an additional sound to the initial base word.

Syllabic Structure: grón   ògrón grón

| | | | | | | | | | | | |

ccvc   vccvc ccvc

In this reduplication, we observe a contrast in English in that the word "tall" as a noun cannot be reduplicated, but this is possible in Urhobo. In Urhobo, reduplication functions as a modifier and qualifier, while English does not depend on reduplication to form modification but rather utilises word classes to form reduplication.

Data 5: òtótáfè

	Stem	Reduplication
Urhobo	táfè	òtótáfè
	|	|
English	outside	always outside

The reduplication above is formed by adding a prefix that serves as a modifier. The base word is "táfè" which means "outside", while the reduplication "òtótáfè" means "always outside", which is an adjectival modifier added to the preposition "outside". This is a partial and non-continuous type of reduplication as the reduplicant does not possess a continuous flow of the base word phonological and syntactically. The function of this reduplicant, as in other Urhobo reduplication, is to modify the base word. This form of reduplication changes the word from the preposition "outside" to an adjective "always outside." In English, the word "outside" cannot be reduplicated but can be used as a preposition in a sentence. This shows contrasts in English and Urhobo reduplication; while most English reduplications are used to portray emphasis, Urhobo reduplicated words function as modifiers and qualifiers.

Data 6: ighighó

	Stem	Reduplication
Urhobo	ighó	ighighó
	|	|
English	money	, lots of money

The base word is "ighó" - "money" while the reduplicant, a prefix - "high", is added to the base to form "high" – lots of money. The word money in English can be pluralised through the addition of modifiers such as "a lot", "some", and "more". In Urhobo, this is achieved by using reduplication, as the data shows – "ighighó", which pluralises the noun money, and is accomplished by adding a prefix to the base word. The reduplication as an addition of a prefix shows changes in phonology.

Syllabic structure: ighó ighighó

| | | ||| ||

vcv vcv cv

Phonologically, the base word possesses a syllabic structure of "ighighó" – consonants (c) vowel (v) and consonants (c), but the reduplication, which is just an addition of a vowel and a consonant syllabic structure – high. Syntactically, while the base is a noun, the reduplication added a qualifier. This helps to portray abundance, as reduplication can be used to express abundance of quantity. Semantically, the reduplication shares the same meaning as the base word. The use of prefixes as a form of reduplication is unique to Urhobo. While English possesses rhyming reduplication that looks similar to Urhobo partial–prefix reduplication, significant differences exist. Phonological differences can also be accounted for in Urhobo reduplications form through prefixes instead of English.

Partial Reduplication: Addition of Suffix

Data 7: ùdúdú

	Stem	Reduplication
Urhobo	ùdú	ùdúdú
	|	|
English	heart	strong-hearted

The above data shows a case of reduplication through suffixes. The base word is "ùdú", meaning "heart"; the reduplication is "ùdúdú" which means "strong-hearted". This is a form of partial reduplication through suffixes. In this reduplication, The base word udu is a noun; the reduplicant is an adjective modifying the base word. To form this reduplication, parts of the base words are repeated phonologically.

Syllabic Structure:	ùdú	ùdúdú
	| | |	||| ||
	vcv	vcv cv

From the above structure, the reduplication is formed by the repetition of the final consonants and vowels from the base word, which is then added to the base through a suffix. Semantically, this reduplication helps to describe the meaning of the word as it helps us more about the root word.

Data 8: òbóbó

	Stem	Reduplication
Urhobo	òbó	òbóbó
	|	|
English	Hand	Full of hands

As part of the function of reduplication, the above data is reduplicated to show plurality. The last consonant and vowel are reduplicated to form the reduplication. Thus, it is a form of partial reduplication. The base word is a noun, while the reduplication is an adjective. Semantically, the reduplication could mean more than one hand, and pragmatically, it could also denote generosity (to give others a helping hand). As such, reduplication also helps disguise and give the root additional meaning. This reduplication can thus function as a qualifier for the noun.

It can be seen that most partial reduplications in Urhobo are used for grammatical functions such as plurality, modifiers and qualifiers or as a form of complement. On the other hand, the English language does not depend on reduplication as a means of expressing qualifier, modifier or plurality but possesses grammatical lexical items for those functions. This thus differentiates Urhobo reduplication from theirs.

Findings
The Findings of the study are:

i.   Urhobo and English reduplication are similar as both possess the same types of reduplication: total and partial.

ii.   The Urhobo and English languages have similar functions of reduplications. Both languages use reduplication to show intensity and emphasis.

iii.   The process of forming complete reduplication, such as fárhiẹn fárhiẹn shows the same phonological sameness, which is also the case in English complete reduplication, such as fifty-fifty.

iv.   While Urhobo and English possess partial reduplication, Urhobo forms partial reduplication through the addition of prefixes and suffixes, but English forms partial reduplication through changes in particular consonants, such as razzle-dazzle.

v.   Most Urhobo reduplication functions as modifiers and qualifiers, while English does not rely on reduplication to establish modifiers and qualifiers.

vi.   Urhobo reduplication, such as òbóbó, is used to show plurality, as opposed to the English language, which uses inflexion "s" and summative pronouns to show plurality.

Conclusion

This study has shown that reduplication is an important aspect of all languages as it plays several functions. Two main languages – English and Urhobo, have been compared to show the similarities and differences in the reduplication process of both languages. The study uses Doubling Theory by Inkles and Zoll (2005). The study establishes that reduplication, viewed as the repetition of a word or part of a base, is present in both Urhobo and English. While both possess reduplication, the study identified similarities and differences in the process and results of reduplication in both languages. The similarities in the reduplication of both languages are the presence of both total and partial forms in their reduplication process. In contrast, the study concludes that Urhobo utilises reduplication for other grammatical functions, such as pluralisations and modification, whereas English does not depend on reduplication to achieve these grammatical functions. The study conclusion thus shows that an understanding of Urhobo reduplication systems will help native speakers who are learners of the English language to easily understand the English reduplication as Urhobo shares many similarities with that of the English language.

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