Linguistic Issues in Language Technology – LiLT
Submitted, January 2012

Polish Dependency Bank

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Published by CSLI Publications

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Abstract

The paper outlines the first Polish dependency bank derived from constituent trees. The conversion is a fully automatic and unambiguous process. The converter takes manually disambiguated constituent trees encoded in the XML format as input and produces dependency structures encoded in the column-based CoNLL format. The conversion is a relatively straightforward process, since constituents have their syntactic centres marked in most cases. However, a certain amount of reorganising is necessary, in order to make the dependency structures meet annotation principles. The main part of the paper will be devoted to a characteristics of Polish dependency types. The Polish dependency bank can be used for training or evaluation of Polish parsers.

1 Introduction

The Polish dependency bank consists of about 7500 syntactically annotated sentences derived from the Polish constituency treebank.¹ A bank of constituent trees is under development at the Institute of Computer Science PAS (Świdziński and Woliński 2010). The planned size of the treebank is 20,000 sentences taken from the hand-annotated balanced subcorpus of the National Corpus of Polish (Przepiórkowski et al. 2010). However, as the project is still ongoing, trees for about 7500 sentences are currently available. The structure of constituent trees is designed with convertibility in mind. In particular, each constituent has its syntactic centre marked, which makes it relatively straightforward to convert constituent trees into dependency structures.

Sentences in the Polish dependency bank are annotated as graphs with arcs representing directed binary relations between lexical nodes (tokens). Every token in a sentence is linked with a dependency type. One of related tokens is regarded as the head of the dependency relation, while the other one is its dependent. Arcs linking lexical nodes are named with dependency labels. All nodes in a dependency structure correspond to terminal nodes of a constituent tree and are assigned an unique index. The ROOT node is always assigned the index 0. All other nodes are assigned the index corresponding to the position of the token in a sentence.

The conversion is a fully automatic and unambiguous process. The converter takes manually disambiguated constituent trees encoded in the XML format as input and outputs dependency structures encoded in the column-based CoNLL format (Buchholz and Marsi 2006). The choice of the output format has been determined by available dependency parsing systems, which we are going to use, and formats admitted by them.

The annotation schema of constituent trees requires encoding some morpho-syntactic information for each constituent. We make use of this information and transfer surface forms, lemmas, part-of-speech tags and morphological features of each token into the appropriate dependency structure, without the need for additional language processing tools. Except for the morpho-syntactic information, which is essential to derive dependency structures from constituent trees, we make use of phrasal categories and types of phrase structure rules

¹ The Polish constituent treebank is being developed in a semi-automatic manner. First, candidate parse trees are automatically generated for a sentence. Then, they are validated by human annotators, i.e., the candidate parse tree best corresponding to constraints of the Świdziński's formal definition of Polish (Świdziński 1992) is selected. If no correct tree exists, the sentence and its parse trees are rejected.

used to build and annotate constituent trees. Some dependency types have been also encoded in constituent trees, e.g. subject. The subject relation is directly transferred onto dependency structures. Many other dependencies are possible to extract, as constituent trees contain information about the head of a large part of constituents. An undoubted advantage of the constituency annotation schema is the distinction between *required phrases* (Pol. ‘fraza wymagana’) and *free phrases* (Pol. ‘fraza luźna’). Required phrases correspond to arguments subcategorised by verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns and prepositions. The morpho-syntactic information and types of phrase structure rules enable the identification of dependency types for these arguments.

As the main goal of our work is to give a detailed description of the schema used to annotate dependency structures, section 2 is devoted to the characteristics of Polish dependency types. In order to meet annotation principles, we will present the necessary reordering of derived dependency structures in section 3. In this document, we put emphasis on the presentation of the annotation schema of dependency structures. However, we also perform some experiments (section 4). The derived dependency bank will be used to train and to evaluate a dependency parser for Polish. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2 Polish Dependency Types

Our goal is to convert the source constituent treebank to a bank of labelled dependency structures. The idea behind the conversion is to cover all language-specific syntactic phenomena encoded in the available Polish constituent trees and to annotate them with correctly chosen dependencies. Therefore, the precise definition of dependency relations seems to be crucial. Based on our research, we compile a list of valid Polish dependency types, which are discussed below. We start with the presentation of argument types, continue with defining non-argument dependencies and finish with the treatment of coordinating constructions.

2.1 Arguments

1. *comp* – complement

The *comp* function may have diverse realisations and may be governed by differently realized heads.

The **adjectival complement** may be governed by a verb form, e.g. *uczynić kogoś silnym_{ADJ}* (Eng. ‘to make sb. strong’).

Similarly, the **adverbial complement** may be governed by a verb form, e.g. *zeskoczyć skądś_{ADV}* (Eng. ‘to jump from somewhere’).

The **nominal complement**, in turn, may be governed by an adjective, e.g. *pełny mleka*_{NOM} (Eng. ‘full of milk’), a preposition, a verb form or a numeral. A nominal *comp* governed by a verb form has not to be promoted to the subject during passivisation, therefore it may be distinguished from *obj*. Furthermore, it may fulfil different semantic roles Location, Instrument, Goal, etc. (except for Recipient, Experiencer, etc., reserved for *obj_th*).

Regarding numeral phrases, we annotate numerals as governors of depending noun phrases. According to Saloni and Świdziński (1998), who argue for treating numerals as heads in Polish numeral phrases, it is the numeral that is governed by the verb form. The case of the dependent noun phrase, in turn, either agrees with the case of the governing numeral (dative, instrumental, locative) or is determined as genitive in case of nominative, accusative, vocative or genitive numerals.

The **prepositional complement** may be governed by a verb form, an adjective, e.g. *zdolny do*_{PREP} (Eng. ‘able to, capable of’) or an adverb, e.g. *właśnie przeż*_{PREP} (Eng. ‘just by’).

2. *comp_fin* – clausal complement

The *comp_fin* function is fulfilled by a closed complement clause (declarative, interrogative, or exclamatory) with an internal subject that may be realized as a pro-drop pronoun. The *comp_fin* argument may be governed by a verb form, a subordinating conjunction or a noun (see (1)).

- (1)
- NEG answer_{PAST} on question_{ACC} what REFL to her happen_{PAST}
 ‘She did not answer the question what happened to her.’

3. *comp_inf* – infinitival clausal complement

The *comp_inf* function realized as an infinitival clausal complement (non-finite clause) may be governed by an adjective phrase (see (2)), a noun phrase, e.g. (*mieć*) *prawo coś zrobić* (Eng. ‘(to have) the right to do sth’) or a verb form. Different control verbs or quasi-verbs² may bear the *comp_inf* complement, e.g. *chcieć* (Eng. ‘to want’), *kazać* (Eng. ‘to order, to tell’), *można* (Eng. ‘to be allowed’), *trzeba* (Eng. ‘it’s necessary’).

²The impersonal and subjectless Polish quasi-verbs may be conjugated for tense and mood, but not for person, e.g. *można* (Eng. ‘to be allowed’), *trzeba* (Eng. ‘it’s necessary’).

4. *complm* – complementizer

The *complm* function is fulfilled by a complementizer, e.g. *że*, *iz* (Eng. 'that'), *żeby*, *aby*, *by* (Eng. 'so as to'). A complementizer introduces a complement clause, the predicate of which is its governor. In some contexts, a complementizer may be realized optionally (see (2)).

5. *obj* – direct object

The *obj* argument governed by a verb form is realized as a noun phrase marked for the accusative, genitive, instrumental or even dative case, e.g. *zagrozić czemuś_{DAT}* (Eng. 'to threaten sth'). The principal feature of *obj* is its ability to transform into the subject in passive constructions. This feature distinguishes *obj* from other verb arguments realized as noun phrases.

6. *obj_th* – dative object

The *obj_th* function fulfilled by a dative noun phrase is governed by a verb form. Apart from the dative case marking, there are some additional properties distinguishing *obj_th* from other nominal verb arguments. First, *obj_th* must fulfil the semantic role of Recipient, Experiencer, Beneficiary, etc. Second, it cannot be promoted to the subject during passivisation or change its status to the direct object through any argument-structure alternation (e.g. 'dative shift', Kibort 2008).

7. *pd* – predicative complement

Any element (verbal or small clause, adjective phrase, noun phrase, etc.) in the predicative position in a sentence is annotated as *pd*. The *pd* function may be governed by a form of the copula verb *być* (Eng. 'to be') or copula-like verbs, e.g. *stać się* (Eng. 'to become'), *nazywać się* (Eng. 'be called').

8. *subj* – subject

The *subj* argument is subcategorised by the sentence predicate. If *subj* takes the form of a nominative noun phrase, it must morphologically agree with the predicate in person, number and gender. If it takes the form of a noun phrase marked for a case other than the nominative, the predicate is realized as a 3rd person singular verb form marked for the neuter gender. The *subj* function

may be also realized as a sentential clause, an adjectival phrase, a numeral phrase, etc. Furthermore, the Polish subject may take the form of an elliptic pro-drop pronoun *pro*. *pro* is not encoded in a dependency structure consisting of nodes that correspond to tokens in a sentence and not any additional (artificial) nodes. In contrast to other complements governed by a predicate, *subj* is responsible for binding anaphoric expressions (reflexive and reciprocal pronouns) and may control adverbial participles in Polish.

2.2 Non-arguments

9. *adjunct* – adjunct

Adjunct is a non-subcategorised dependent with the modifying function. It may be realized as an *adjective* depending on a noun or a numeral, an *adverb* depending on a verb form, an another adverb, an adjective or a prepositional phrase, an *attributive noun* marked for genitive with a nominal or numeral head, a *noun phrase* with the temporal, locative, etc. meaning and a verbal head, a *number* depending on a noun, a *past* or *present adverbial participle* with a verbal head, an *active* or *passive adjectival participle* with a nominal head, a *prepositional phrase* depending on a noun, a verb, an adverb or a participle, a *subordinate clause* with a head realized as a noun, a numeral or a verb form, a *conditional subordinate clause* depending on the sentence predicate of a matrix clause, the *question particle* (*czy*) with a verb form as its head, etc.

10. *aglt* – mobile inflection

The *aglt* function fulfilled by a ‘mobile’ affix (verbal enclitic) is marked for number, person and gender. A mobile inflection may depend on a verb form or a conditional clitic *by* appended to a verb form (see (3)).

11. *app* – apposition

Apposition *app* is most commonly realized as a noun phrase depending on an immediately preceding noun or as the second noun in a noun-noun compound, e.g. *strażak-ratownik* (Eng. ‘fireman-

rescuer’) depending on the first one. As we currently do not distinguish named entities, a last name is annotated as the dependent of a first name.

12. *aux* – auxiliary verbs

The *aux* function is fulfilled by conjugated auxiliary verbs *być* or *zostać* (Eng. ‘to be’). It depends on the main verb form (participle, infinitive) in analytical future tense constructions, analytical past conditional constructions or passive constructions.

13. *cond* – conditional clitic

The *cond* function is fulfilled by the clitic particle *by*, which may be appended to the verb form (see (3)) or may appear anywhere in a sentence. Regardless of its location, the conditional clitic depends on the verbal head.

14. *imp* – imperative particle

The *imp* function is fulfilled by the particle *niech* (Eng. ‘let, may’) and depends on the main verb form in analytical imperative constructions.

15. *mwe* – multiword expression

The successive tokens of a multiword expression are annotated according to their linear order, i.e., the first token constitutes the head of the second token which is, in turn, the head of the next token. The following tokens combinations are annotated as multiword expressions: preposition-adjectival phrases, e.g. *po prostu*_{ADJ} (Eng. ‘simply’), *co gorsza* (Eng. ‘what is worse’), preposition-adverbial phrases, e.g. *na pewno*_{ADV} (Eng. ‘for sure’), *na zewnątrz*_{ADV} (Eng. ‘outside’), *co najmniej* (Eng. ‘at least’), adverb-prepositional phrases,³ e.g. *wraz z* (Eng. ‘along with’), *zgodnie z* (Eng. ‘in accordance with’) (see(5)), complex conjunctions, e.g. *a więc* (Eng. ‘therefore’), *nie tylko* (Eng. ‘not only’), *ale także* (Eng. ‘but also’), *jak i* (Eng. ‘and’), *mimo że* (Eng. ‘although’), *podczas gdy* (Eng. ‘whereas’), adjective compounds, e.g. *biało-czerwona* (Eng. ‘white-red’).

³Several combinations of adverbs and prepositions are regarded by Milewska (2003) as complex prepositions (Pol. ‘przyimki wtórne’).

16. *neg* – negation marker (negator)
 The *neg* function is fulfilled by the negation marker *nie* (Eng. ‘not’) mostly with a verbal head immediately following it.
17. *pred* – sentence predicate (or a nominal predicate)
 The *pred* function may be fulfilled by a verb form (finite verb, -no/-to-impersonal, infinitive) or a ‘main’ noun in independently annotated noun phrases. It always depends on the *ROOT* node.
18. *punct* – punctuation mark
 The *punct* type fulfilled by a punctuation mark, e.g. *.,;?!()*” depends on the element which it delimits.
19. *abbrev_punct* – abbreviation marker
 The *abbrev_punct* function fulfilled by a full stop depends on the preceding abbreviation.
20. *refl* – reflexive marker
 The reflexive marker depends on a verb with reflexive meaning or another verb. The *refl* function is realized as the particle *się* in Polish.

2.3 Coordination

21. *conjunct* – coordinated conjunct
 Coordinated conjuncts depend on a coordinating conjunction.
22. *coord* – coordinating conjunction
 The conjunction coordinating two sentences/clauses is annotated as *coord* (see (6)). The conjunction coordinating elements other than clauses, e.g. nouns in nominal coordination, is annotated with an appropriate dependency type.
23. *coord_punct* – punctuation conjunction
 If no coordinating conjunction is used to coordinate two elements, a punctuation mark, e.g. comma, colon, is used as the coordinating element (see (6)).
24. *pre_coord* – pre-conjunction
 The first part of a two-part correlative conjunction, e.g. *albo... albo...* (Eng. ‘either... or...’), *ani... ani...* (Eng. ‘neither... nor...’) depends on the second part of the conjunction.

3 Reordering in Dependency Structures

The conversion is a relatively straightforward process, since constituents have their syntactic centre marked in most cases. However, a certain amount of reorganising is necessary, in order to make dependency structures meet the principles of the dependency graph theory.

3.1 Head Selection

According to theoretical principles of the dependency graph, each token may have only one head. In Polish constituent trees, there is a centre marked in most constituents. We make use of this information and annotate each central element in a constituent tree as the head in the equivalent dependency structure. However, there are some cases where several elements have been marked as centres and we have to decide which one should be annotated as the head in the dependency structure. We identify multi-headed scenarios and define some head-selection heuristics.

The first case concerns a conditional verb form consisting of a verbal stem and a conditional clitic *by*. As both of them have been annotated as central elements of a constituent, we decide to select the verb form as the head of the conditional particle and label the relation *cond* (see (3)). Similarly, a mobile inflection, which is regarded as an independent syntactic element in Polish, may be appended to a verb form or a conditional verb form (see (3)) and all elements are regarded centres of a constituent. We annotate a verbal stem or a conditional particle as the head of the mobile inflection *aglt*.

The second case of multi-headed constituents concerns analytical verb and quasi-verb forms. An analytical verb form consists of an auxiliary verb and a main verb form (infinitive, participle). The auxiliary verb fulfils some grammatical functions and constitutes a morpho-syntactic extension of the main verb. There are two auxiliary verbs in Polish: *zostać* (Eng. ‘to be’) used only in passive constructions and *być* (Eng. ‘to be’) used to build the imperfective future tense, the analytical past conditional, analytical forms of quasi-verb, e.g. *będzie trzeba* (Eng. ‘it will be necessary’), analytical forms of predicative *to* and pas-

sive constructions. All parts of analytical verb forms⁴ have been marked as central elements of a constituent. We convert the main verb form as the head of the auxiliary verb (*aux*).

We also have to select the head of complex subordinating or coordinating conjunctions, all parts of which have been annotated as constituent centres. In two-part subordinating conjunctions, e.g. *mimo že* (Eng. ‘although’), the first token is converted as the head of the second one and the relation is labelled *mwe*. In two-part coordinating conjunctions, e.g. *albo... albo...* (Eng. ‘either... or...’), the first element depends on the second one and the relation is labelled *pre_coord*.

In case of other multi-headed constituents, we select the first element as the head of the second element, which is, in turn, the head of the next one, and so on, e.g. abbreviation, multiword expressions, series of punctuation marks.

3.2 Discontinuous Constituents

As the constituent annotation schema does not admit discontinuous constituents, unconnected constituent parts are encoded as ‘independent’ constituents. The straightforward conversion of discontinuous constituents results in dependency structures which are incompatible with annotation principles outlined in section 2. That is why we decide to reorder the dependency structure and annotate it in accordance with annotation principles, even if it results in a non-projective dependency structure (see (7)). Currently, we only identify and reorganise discontinuous numeral phrases.

3.3 Passive Construction

The passive voice is indicated in Polish by a conjugated auxiliary verb combined with the past or present adverbial participle. In constituent trees, auxiliary verbs constitute centres of passive constructions and participles have been annotated as adjectival phrases required by auxiliaries. Nevertheless, we annotate passive constructions by analogy to

⁴We will consider passive constructions in Section 3.3, as they have been annotated differently to analytical verb forms in constituent trees.

analytical future or past conditional constructions. The participle is governed by the ROOT node and the relation is labelled *pred*. The auxiliary verb depends on the participle and the relation is labelled *aux*. Required arguments and non-subcategorised adjuncts depend on the sentence predicate.

3.4 Subordinate Clauses

Different types of subordinate clauses with adjectival status are distinguished in the constituent treebank. We found out that annotations of subordinate clauses of the same type differ, which may violate our conversion rules.⁵ We recognise particular clause types by categories of phrase structure rules and convert them uniformly.

In subordinate clauses introduced by a conjunction, e.g. *albowiem*, *bo*, *gdyż* (Eng. ‘because, since’), the conjunction constitutes the head of a subordinate clause and depends on the sentence predicate of the matrix clause. Similarly, conjunctions *jeśli*, *gdyby* (Eng. ‘if’) introduce subordinate clauses and depend on the sentence predicate of the matrix clause. However, they may be accompanied by an optional particle *to* (Eng. ‘then’) at the beginning of the matrix clause. The particle *to* depends on the sentence predicate of the matrix clause and is labelled *adjunct* (see (8)).

In relative clauses depending on noun phrases, the clause predicate constitutes the head of the entire relative clause (see (9)). The relative pronoun is governed by the head verb and labelled according to the annotation schema.

⁵ At the same time as the Polish constituent grammar improves, the annotation rules change and next sentences are annotated according to the new rules. However, there are still some previously annotated trees that are incompatible with the present grammar version.

3.5 Incorporated Conjunction

Polish admits complex sentences with a conjunction incorporated into a clause, instead of taking an initial position in this clause. We may distinguish between constructions with the coordinating conjunction, e.g. *przeto, więc, zatem* (Eng. ‘therefore, then’) incorporated into the second of coordinated clauses and constructions with the subordinating conjunction, e.g. *bowiem* (Eng. ‘since, as’), which may appear anywhere in the subordinate clause. In constituent trees, the incorporated conjunction depends on the immediately preceding constituent, e.g. verb, adverb, noun. Even if the conversion may result in a non-projective dependency structure, we annotate complex sentences with incorporated conjunctions according to our annotation schema. The incorporated conjunction constitutes either the head of coordinated clauses (see (10)) or the head of a subordinate clause.

3.6 Correlation-based Interpolation

The correlation-based interpolation Pol. *korelat* (Świdziński 1992) is a pronoun (or a pronoun in a prepositional phrase) that correlates with a subordinate clause. In constituent trees, it is the subordinate clause that is annotated as the constituent centre and the pronoun is its correlation-based interpolation. As we do not want to introduce any additional dependency type, we attempt to manage such constructions with our annotation schema. We convert the pronoun depending on the sentence predicate as the governor of the subordinate clause (see (11)).

Besides described reordering, we do not interfere in the internal structure of constituent trees and we take syntactic facts encoded in trees as they are.

4 Polish Dependency Parser

The Polish dependency bank could be used as the gold standard for evaluation of Polish parsers. However, we are not aware of any publicly available Polish dependency parser. That is why we decided to train a Polish dependency parser on the part of the dependency bank using a publicly available parser-generation system. The induced parser is evaluated against two sets of dependency structures using labelled and unlabelled accuracy metrics.

4.1 Parsing System

The Polish dependency parser is trained with the publicly available parsing system – MaltParser⁶ (Nivre et al. 2006), which uses a transition-based parsing method. A transition-based dependency parser uses a deterministic parsing algorithm that builds a dependency structure of an input sentence based on transitions (shift-reduce actions) predicted by a classifier. The classifier learns to predict the next transition given training data and the parse history. The architecture of an induced deterministic parser consists of three main components: a **parsing algorithm** deriving a labelled dependency structure from an input sentence, a **feature model** helping in prediction of the next parser action, and a treebank-induced **classifier** deterministically predicting the optimal next action given a feature representation of a parser configuration in the current state.

We have carried out a series of experiments aiming at the identification of settings of the best performing parser. We select the built-in parsing algorithm **stackeager** (Nivre 2009) designed for non-projective dependency structures. A feature model is defined in terms of token attributes, i.e., word form (FORM), coarse-grained part-of-speech tag (CPOS), part-of-speech tag (POS), morphological features (FEATS), and lemma (LEMMA) available in input data, or dependency types (DEPREL) extracted from partially built dependency graphs and updated during parsing. The chosen classifier is trained with the LIBSVM library (Chang and Lin 2001), which is an implementation of support vector machines.

4.2 Experiment and Results

We randomly split the entire dependency bank into a training set with 6832 sentences and a validation set containing 759 sentences. It is worth mentioning that sentences in our data set are not long and consist of 9.8 tokens on average. Therefore, we assume that they have relatively

⁶We use MaltParser 1.4.1 downloaded from <http://maltparser.org>.

simple syntactic structures in most cases. That is why we also decide to validate the parsing quality in the realistic parsing scenario. We evaluate the parsing quality against the set of 50 manually annotated sentences (17.8 tokens/sentence) taken from two Polish magazines and the National Corpus of Polish (NKJP).⁷ The performance of the Polish MaltParser is evaluated with the following metrics: *labelled attachment score* (LAS)⁸ and *unlabelled attachment score* (UAS)⁹.

According to our results, the Polish MaltParser achieves 88.4% LAS and 91.4% UAS if tested against the validation set (759 sentences) and 71% LAS/75.2% UAS if tested against the set of manually annotated sentences. We also evaluate individual labels in terms of precision, recall and f-measure. It is worth noting that we obtain balanced precision and recall values. It follows that if the parser finds a dependency relation between two tokens there is a great chance to label it correctly.

The cursory error analysis of the parsed sentences selected from newspapers and NKJP shows that the parser had considerable problems with analysing some syntactic phenomena, especially coordination, subordination and apposition. Furthermore, it did not find any of five multiword expressions. It follows that such constructions may be too sparsely represented in the training corpus. As Polish is a relatively free order language, sentences such as the one in (12) taken from our manually annotated bank are quite commonly used. However, such sentences are not present in the constituent bank and as a result they might not be converted to the Polish dependency bank. Training of a dependency parser on the bank lacking in dependency structures of free-ordered sentences leads to decrease in the parsing performance.

⁷ We have annotated two excerpts from *Newsweek Polska* (13 sentences) and from *Zwierciadło* (Eng. 'Mirror') (4 sentences). Furthermore, we have randomly selected 33 sentences from the National Corpus of Polish.

⁸ Labelled attachment score (LAS) – the percentage of tokens that are assigned a correct head and a correct dependency type.

⁹ Unlabelled attachment score (UAS) – the percentage of tokens that are assigned a correct head.

5 Conclusions

The Polish dependency bank derived from the constituency treebank contains sentences annotated with dependency structures. As the choice of a dependency relation seems to have a crucial impact on the annotation quality, we conducted a detailed analysis of Polish dependency types. The conversion was a fully automatic and unambiguous process. However, reordering in the final dependency structures was necessary to make them meet the principles of the dependency graph theory.

As the final experiment shows, it is possible to train a Polish dependency parser on the derived dependency bank. We achieved parsing results of 88.4% LAS if evaluated against the validation set of sentences randomly selected from the entire dependency bank and results of 71% LAS in more realistic scenario of parsing newspapers excerpts. The results are quite optimistic and encourage us to continue the development of the Polish dependency bank.

Acknowledgments

This research is supported by the POIG.01.01.02-14-013/09 project which is cofinanced by the European Union under the European Regional Development Fund.

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