

Dialect Syntax in the Audible Corpus of Rural Spoken Spanish (Corpus Oral y Sonoro del Español Rural or COSER)

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1. Why collect a corpus like COSER?
2. Some specific dialect syntax issues researched so far with COSER data
 - Third person unstressed pronoun paradigms
 - Mood changes: subjunctive replacement
 - Mass neuter agreement
3. COSER characteristics and aims (2012-2013)
4. Prospects
 - Some ongoing research
 - A dialect syntax rare bird? Quantifiers' gender syncretism

1. Why collect a corpus like COSER?

Most of the available data comes from written sources, which, of course, use the standard language or the language standard for a particular area.

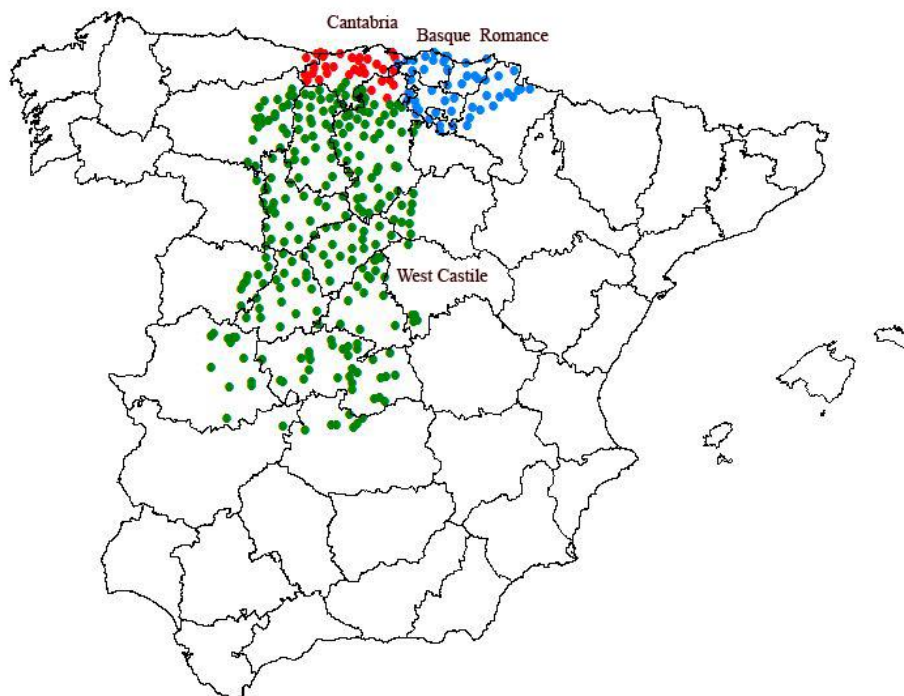
There is still a large amount of syntax variation that is not to be found in the corpora. Or if it is found, we cannot be sure which area a concrete feature belongs to or whether we have all the pertinent linguistic information at our disposal.

The reason for those shortcomings is that the quantity of data coming from spoken sources is still scarce in the corpora, so we are missing most of the features that do not cross over the threshold of literacy.

Both dialect monographs and linguistic atlases hardly tackle grammar variation, but mainly focus on pronunciation and lexis.

Traditional Spanish dialectologists lacked interest for syntax and theory. Therefore, dialect grammar remained without proper descriptions nor adequate explanations.

COSER MAIN OUTCOME OF FIRST FIELDWORK CAMPAIGNS (1990-1997)



***Leísmo* zone and the three different 3rd p. unstressed pronoun paradigms**

(Fernández-Ordóñez 1994, 1999)

These dialect paradigms only partially appear in the written and even in the oral standard usage, so that the shortage of written data was misleading in a way the traditional interpretations, or at least, complicating the whole picture of the phenomenon.

This research proved that recording in rural localities had a threefold interest:

- 1) To mark out for the first time, or to narrow, the isogloss for a particular feature.
- 2) To develop new hypotheses on syntactic variation already known (due to the larger amount of data and the better linguistic descriptions).
- 3) Even to discover new syntactic variation phenomena.

Our knowledge of Spanish variation has improved in that

- 1) New dialect areas of Peninsular Spanish have emerged, namely a Western Spanish vs. an Eastern Spanish.
- 2) Contrast between urban speech and rural speech has been made possible. Therefore, the sociolinguistic selection of some grammatical features has become evident.
- 3) Contrast between data from old atlases and present oral data has shown the historical development of some dialect aspects, whether maintenance or decline and loss.

2. Some specific outcomes from COSER

2.1. Mood changes: replacement and loss of subjunctive

- (1) a. No creo que ha venido (Basque Spanish)

Not I think that he has come [Present perfect indicative]

- b. No creo que haya venido

Not I think that he has come [Present perfect subjunctive]

‘I do not think that he has come’



Conditional and Imperfect Indicative replacing Imperfect Subjunctive in COSER (Pato 2003, 2004).

The atlases omitted the fact that the imperfect subjunctive is not only replaced by the conditional *–ría* (majority variant), but also by the imperfect indicative *–ba* (minority variant).

Santervás de la Vega (Palencia):

- (2) a. Las costillas y todas esas cosas se metían en ollas para que se *conservarían*.

(Cutlets and all those things were put in pots so that they *would be preserved*).

- b. Se las colgaba en la cocina o en una habitación, o como fuera... que las diera un poco el sol, para que *estaban* más buenas [las morcillas].

(They were hung in the kitchen or in a room or anywhere... provided that they got some sun, so that they *were* more tasty [sausages]).

Therefore, in statistical terms, data quantifying from a corpus like *COSER* enables conclusions to be drawn far closer to reality as regards linguistic uses.

How and why emerged this subjunctive replacement?

Traditional accounts supposed that it arose in *conditional sentences* due to differences of probability:

- (3) a. Yo, si me *casaría*, me casaría otra vez con el mismo (Celada de la Torre, Burgos).

Me, if I would marry-Conditional Indicative again, I would marry the same man.

- b. Pues yo, si *sería* joven, os digo la verdad, no cambiaba la vida de antes con la de ahora (Villalcázar de Sirga, Palencia).

If a would be-Conditional Indicative young again, I say you the truth, I would not change old times for new ones.

- (4) *Complement clauses*

- a. Quería que *seguiría* estudiando (Garde, Navarra).

He want that I would continue studying.

- b. Nos daba pena que *iría* tan pronto a la cama (Sopuerta, Vizcaya).

We felt sorry that he would go so early in bed.

- (5) *Relative and adverbial clauses*

- a. Íbamos a comprar todas las cosas que nos *harían* falta (Herramélluri, La Rioja).

We went to buy anything we would need.

- b. Había que ir a lavar la lana al río, aquí o donde *sería* (Astudillo, Palencia).

We had to go to the river or wherever would be to wash the wool.

- c. Se guardaba [la lana] en un cajón hasta que *vendrían* los laneros (Fuentecén, Burgos).

Wool was kept in a drawer until the wool men would come.

- (6) *Concessive clauses*

Aunque *tendrías* mil pesetas, no las podrías gastar (Temiño, Burgos).

Although you would have one thousand pesetas, you could not expend them.

- (7) *Causal clauses*

Mi suegra, no es porque *sería* mi suegra,... pero era oro puro (Nestares, La Rioja).

Mi mother in law, it is not because she would be my mother in law, ... but she was pure gold 'an extraordinary person'.

- (8) ***Frequency of subjunctive replacement according to the type of clauses***

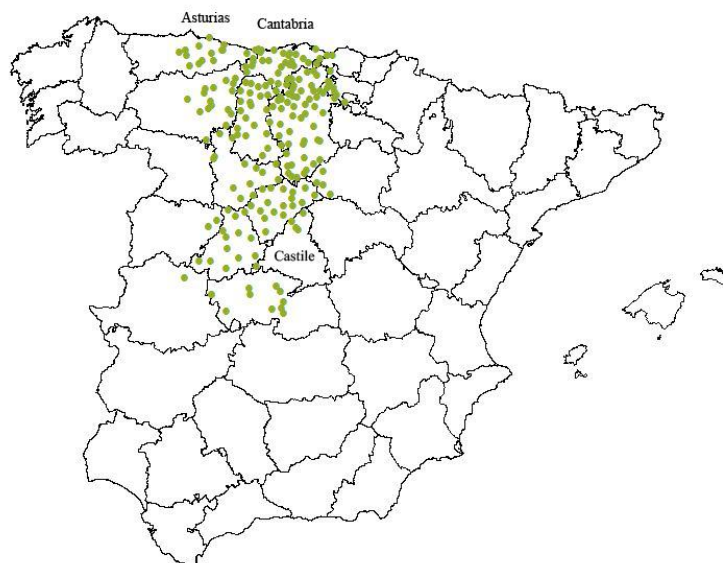
Complement clauses (72.1%) > Adjective and adverbial (modal, locative and temporal) clauses (61.7%) > Conditional / Final (57.5%)

- (9) ***Frequency of displacement of the subjunctive according to the type of antecedent in adjective clauses***

Explicit definite antecedent (*the N who / which*, 70.2%) > Explicit indefinite antecedent (*a N who / which*, 60.3%) > Non-explicit definite antecedent (*the one who / which*, 58.8%) > Non-explicit indefinite antecedent (*one who / which*, 56.4%) > *nobody who / which* (0%)

2.2. Mass neuter agreement

Discovery of syntactic variation completely unknown in an area.



Mass neuter agreement in COSER (Fernández-Ordóñez 2006-2007).

(10)

Determiners (Article and Demonstrative)	Noun	Adjectives	Personal and Demonstrative Pronouns
MASC/FEM	MASC/FEM	MASC/FEM/NEUT	MASC/FEM/NEUT

Gender distinction according to the word class

- (11) a. El buen vinu blanc-o se toma frí-o. Pruéba-lo
the.M good.M wine.M white-N is drunk cold-N taste-it.N
‘Good white wine is drunk cold. Taste it’
b. La buen-a leche fresc-o se toma templad-o. Pruéba-lo
the.F good-F milk.F fresh-N is drunk warmed-N taste-it.N
‘Good fresh milk is drunk warmed. Taste it’

(12) Predicative adjectives and attributive adjectives (if following the noun) express mass neuter agreement:

	Count		Mass
	Masculine	Feminine	Masc. / Fem.
Asturias	-u	-a	-o
Cantabria and Castile	-o	-a	-o

(13)

Mass neuter agreement with feminine nouns	Noun	Attributive adjective	Predicative adjective (<i>ser</i>) Individual-level predicate	Predicative adjective (<i>estar</i>) Stage-level Predicate	Depictive Adjective Stage-level Predicate	Pronoun
Asturias	–	+ 29%	+ 40,5%	+ 58,7%	+ 65%	+ 86,4%
Cantabria	–	– 10%	+ 35%	+ 55%	+ 59,3%	+ 81,5%
Castile	–	–	– 18,5%	+ 51,2%	+ 53,3%	+ 76,5%

(14) Coincidence with the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 2006)

attributive > predicate > relative pronoun > personal pronoun

“For any controller that permits alternative agreements, as we move rightwards along the Agreement Hierarchy, the likelihood of agreement with greater semantic justification will increase monotonically (that is, with no intervening decrease)” (2006:207).

Mass agreement patterns in Ibero-Romance dialects

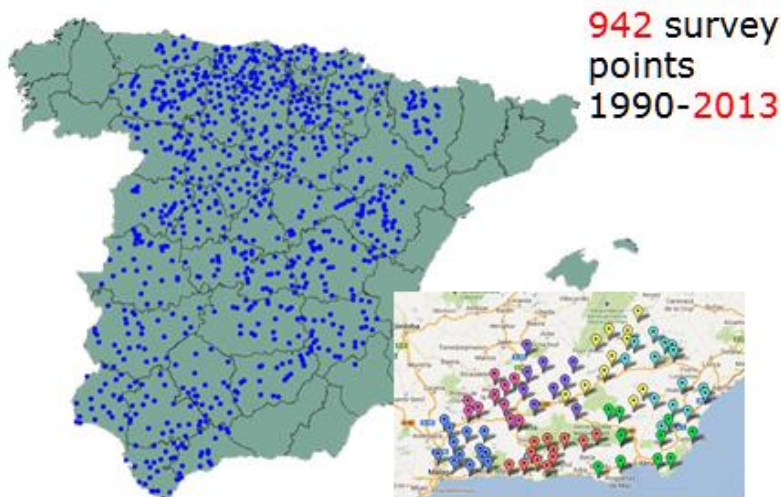
attributive > predicative > secondary predicate > personal and demonstrative pronoun

3. COSER characteristics

• 1652 informants			
Males:	751	(45,4%)	
Females:	901	(54,5%)	
<i>Total:</i>	1.652		
• Average age: 70,6 years.			
• 862 localities from 34 different provinces.			
• Average recording duration: 73 minutes.			
• Global duration: ca. 1.053 hours.			

Overview numbers for COSER in 2012

3. COSER characteristics



Dialect corpus: rural speakers, elders, with little education, native from the place where they are interviewed. Chosen at random, the only condition being that they fit the requirements.

Semi-directed interviews about traditional rural life.

At the present, 126 interviews available in the Internet, 4 localities by province (ca.150 hours of recordings, ca. 2 millions words transcribed).

4. Prospects

4.1. Existential *haber* with third person unstressed pronouns (De Benito 2013)

- (15) a. Y *le hay*, alcalde también (Moraleja de Cuéllar, Segovia)
b. Nosotros aquí cabras, no sé si *las hay* (Fechaladrona, Asturias)
c. Y no se comía fruta porque no *la había* (Puebla de Yeltes, Salamanca)
d. Aquí, aquí, aquí antes había un mercao, que todavía *lo hay* (Navalmoral de la Mata, Cáceres).

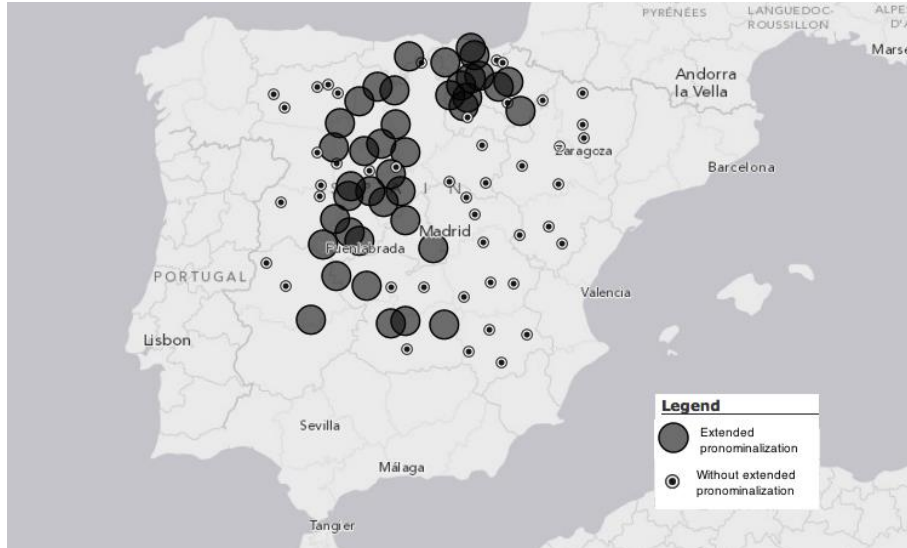


Existential *haber* with third person pronouns in COSER (De Benito 2013)

4.1. Pronominal coding of the patient in reflexive indefinite agent constructions (De Benito 2012)

(16) Villaverde-Mogina (Burgos)

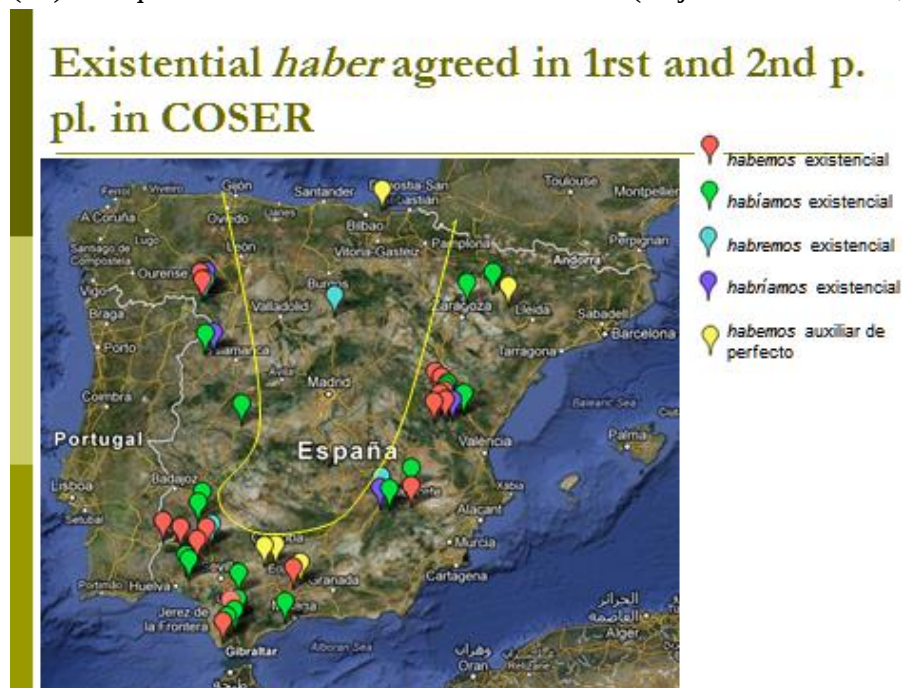
- a. [la gallina_i] Se *la_i* echaba con huevos que tengan gallo.
- b. [tripas de cerdo_i] Se *las_i* deslaba un poco.
- c. [el queso_i] Se *lo_i* tiene un día por lo menos.



Impersonal *se* with 3r. p. pronoun in COSER (De Benito 2012)

4.2. Existential *haber* agreed with 1st and 2nd person plural (Castillo Luch 2012)

(17) Los que *habemos* no cabemos en el mundo (Vejer de la Frontera, Cádiz)



4.3. *Deísmo* or the requirement of the preposition *de* before a subordinate infinitive (Pato & De Benito 2012)

- (18) a. No se suelen *de* pasar cosas (Almadén de la Plata, Sevilla)
b. Me tocó *de* frotarla (Santa Olalla de Cala, Huelva)
c. Yo veía a la gente *de* ir de viaje (Pizarra, Málaga)
d. Así me ahorro *de* pagar la cama (Zafarraya, Granada)



Deísmo in COSER data (Pato & De Benito 2012)

4.4. Gender syncretism in quantifiers' agreement

A prenominal evaluative feminine quantifier does not agree with the following mass masculine noun in Vega de Pas, Cantabria, and surroundings localities:

- (19) a. *mucha* trabajo
much.F work.M
b. *poca* dinero
less.F money.M

(20) Penny's list (1969)

Mass nouns:

- a. mucha viento, mucha suiro
b. poca dinero, poca pelo, poca mercau, poca terrenu, poca género
c. cuanta vino, harta pan

Abstract nouns (and infinitives)

- a. mucha vicio, mucha trabaju, mucha frío, mucha cuido 'cuidado', mucha mieu 'miedo', mucha muermo, mucha odio, mucha rigor, mucha remango, mucha ruido, mucha saber, mucha seso, mucha sueño, mucha tusío 'tos'
b. poca desfuerzu, poca talentu
c. cuantísima tiempo, tanta escribir

(21) *COSER examples (1992-1993)*

Vega de Pas, Cantabria

- a. Una mujer al horno, coge, echa, por ejemplo dice, no van a comer todos los días. Cuando tienen *mucha* tiempo, pero en | el verano es gran-, hacen panes de dos kilos aproximadamente, pero que veinticinco o treinta kilos de harina.

Arredondo, Cantabria

- b. [¿Y ustedes gastan ese vino de botella?] - Yo gasto *poco* vino porque como los hijos no comen en casa, en mi casa entra *poca* vino... Yo no bebo.

Rubalcaba, Cantabria

- c. Cuando yo me criaba, como yo el resto de la edad mía, que no era más que fatigas, *mucha* trabajo, mucha disciplina, que no la hay hoy.

Quintana de los Prados, Burgos

- d. Pero veo que la juventud no tié que hacer nada aquí, no tien na que hacer porque no los apoyan, no los apoyan, la juventú quieren, hace falta apoyo y hace falta, o sea, maquinaria que vale *mucha* dinero y aquí ¿quién lo tiene?
- e. [el jamón] Trajo mi hermano uno de ahí de Espinosa, le tuvo áhi no sé *cuánta* tiempo, no le hizo caso, vamos a comerle y hubo que tirarlo, estaba hueco por dentro, una pila de gusanos.

Portillo de Solórzano, Cantabria

- f. I2: Y luego echábamos allí la cuajada.
E1: Sí.
I2: Y en el molde | de la medida del molde otra tabla.
E1: Sí.
I2: Y encima *mucha* peso, pa que escurriera todo el suero.
- g. I2: La cabra quiere mucha, mucha extensión y se le | la, eh, hay *poca* monte y se va a las fincas. Y el amo de las fincas no lo, no lo consiente.
- h. I1: [RISA] Las vacas tienen | Dan | tienen mucha importancia, y dan *mucha* trabajo y mucha esclavitud. Es lo, eso es esclavi-, muy esclavizao. Lo de las vacas es muy esclavizao.

Problems

1. Why is this quirky agreement in quantifiers and not in articles or demonstratives?
 - a. *mucha* vino.
 - b. **la* vino, **esta* vino.
2. Why is this quirky agreement in evaluative quantifiers and not in other kinds of quantifiers (universal or existential ones)?
 - a. **Alguna* vino.
 - b. **Toda* el vino.
3. Why is this quirky agreement only in prenominal position?
 - a. *Mucha* vino.
 - b. **Vino* compran *mucha*.
4. Why is this quirky agreement not found with a personal or demonstrative pronoun with a neuter interpretation?***

- a. *No quise saberla.
- b. *Esta no es así.

**Non-lexical neuter and mass neuter agreement always share morphology.

5. It has been argued (Arias Cabal 1999) that the *-a* morpheme is a preservation of Latin neuter. Why then is there anything alike in other Romance languages, despite preserving neuter plural morphology (and meaning) in some nouns?

Italian

- a. queste ossa, le braccia
- b. *questa ossa, *la braccia

In Italian dialects, American Spanish and Romanian there are personal and demonstrative *-a* pronouns with a neuter interpretation, but never in prenominal position nor in quantifiers:

(22)

Romanian

- de aceea* 'por eso, lit. por esa'
- asta e intolerabil* 'esto es intolerable, lit. esta es intolerable'

Italian dialects

- Ell'è gran cosa* 'lit. ella' 'eso'
- Ella non andrà così*
- Così la va benissimo*

American Spanish

- Pasarla bien*

HYPOTHESIS

Prenominal quantifiers may have syncretism (in gender and / or number) and do not agree with the following noun because they can become adverbs.

-a morphology is unusual in Romance languages for adverbial or neuter use, but possible as a preservation of Latin plural neuter.

(23) *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica*, nº 319

- Traje *demasiado* cebada
- I brought too much.M barley.F

(24) COSER examples

Comparative phrases

- a. Lo que pasa es que lo de la oveja, de *mucho menos leche* sale más queso; sale más y más dura, mejor queso que lo de vaca (Guriezo, Cantabria).
- b. Antes era la cosa que en el pueblo, pues se mataba igual un cerdo que se mataban dos, y se comía *mucho más carne*, no se salía como ahora que vas y traes carne fresca (Castresana de Losa, Burgos).

Existential haber

- a. Esto son matas, en el río las hay, donde hay *mucho maleza*, ahí se cría, se abre, se quita la cañada y esto no se rompe (Salas de Bureba, Burgos).
- b. Había unos pozos ahí. Ahora, en verano cuando había *mucho seca*, pues iban al río (Bernales, Vizcaya).

(25) Southern and Central Italian dialects (Rohlf's 1949-54)

Muzzu tiempu 'much time', *muzzu* cristiani 'many persons' (siciliano)
quantu foglie 'so many leaves', *quantu* bucci 'so many mouths' (calabrés meridional)
quantu fèmmine 'so many women' (Brindisi)
pòcu pèzzi 'few pieces', *puocu* acqua 'less water' (Calabria)
pòco pasta 'less pasta' (Campania)

(26) German

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----|--------------------------------|
| a. Ich habe <i>viel</i> Arbeit | vs | An <i>die</i> Arbeit gehen! |
| I have much.M work.F | | |
| b. Wie <i>viel</i> Uhr ist es? | vs | Auf <i>die</i> Uhr sehen |
| How much.M hour.F is it? | | |
| c. Ich habe <i>wenig</i> Energie | vs | <i>die</i> elektrische Energie |
| I have less.M strength.F | | |

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