

ANALYSIS OF THE DISCOVERY LEARNING MODEL IN SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION FOR EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS AT SMPN 30 PADANG

ANALISIS MODEL DISCOVERY LEARNING DALAM PEMBELAJARAN IPS UNTUK SISWA KELAS VIII DI SMPN 30 PADANG

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji penerapan model pembelajaran *Discovery Learning* pada mata pelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) di kelas VIII SMP Negeri 30 Padang. Latar belakang kajian ini berangkat dari kebutuhan akan penggunaan strategi pembelajaran inovatif yang dapat meningkatkan partisipasi aktif serta pemahaman siswa selama proses pembelajaran. Penelitian dilaksanakan dengan pendekatan kualitatif menggunakan metode deskriptif. Subjek penelitian meliputi guru IPS dan siswa kelas VIII yang ditentukan melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Temuan penelitian memperlihatkan bahwa penerapan *Discovery Learning* dilaksanakan melalui enam tahap, yaitu pemberian stimulasi, perumusan masalah, pengumpulan informasi, pengolahan data, verifikasi, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Penerapan model ini mendorong siswa untuk berpikir kritis, aktif mengajukan pertanyaan, serta menemukan sendiri konsep materi yang dipelajari. Peran guru lebih difokuskan sebagai fasilitator yang membimbing proses penemuan siswa. Secara keseluruhan, penggunaan model *Discovery Learning* memberikan pengaruh positif terhadap kualitas pembelajaran IPS, khususnya dalam mengembangkan kemandirian dan keaktifan belajar peserta didik.

Abstract

This study aims to examine the implementation of the *Discovery Learning* model in Social Studies (IPS) learning for eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 30 Padang. The background of this research stems from the need to apply innovative learning strategies that can enhance students' active participation and understanding during the learning process. This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The subjects consisted of Social Studies teachers and eighth-grade students, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the implementation of *Discovery Learning* was carried out through six stages: stimulation, problem formulation, information gathering, data processing, verification, and drawing conclusions. The application of this model encouraged students to think critically, actively ask questions, and discover the concepts of the learning material independently. The teacher's role was primarily as a facilitator guiding students through the discovery process. Overall, the use of the *Discovery Learning* model had a positive impact on the quality of Social Studies learning, particularly in fostering students' independence and active learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Entering the Era of the 4.0 Industrial Revolution, the Indonesian government is committed to improving the quality of education to face the upcoming wave of globalization. Efforts to enhance the quality of education must be supported by various sources. National education aims to develop students' abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation. To achieve these goals, both the government and society must provide support.

According to Law No. 20 of 2003, education is a conscious and deliberate effort to create a learning environment and process that enable students to actively develop their potential, including spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, noble character, intelligence, and essential life skills (Indonesia, 2003). According to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the purpose of education is to cultivate students to become complete human beings in life, that is, to live in harmony with nature and their society (Ramadhani, 2023).

One subject that contributes to students' learning at the junior high school level (SMP) is Social Studies (Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial/IPS). So far, many people perceive IPS as a secondary subject. This is evident from the fewer teaching hours allocated to IPS compared to other subjects. Moreover, IPS is often scheduled at the end of classes when students are tired. Many still consider IPS in junior high school unimportant, and students often perceive IPS as a boring subject (Widodo et al., 2020).

Social Studies (IPS) is a comprehensive subject. In Western education, IPS is known as social studies, which Edgar B. Wesley defines as simplified social science for instructional purposes. Zevin (2023) defines Social Studies (IPS) for secondary school teachers as the study of data, analysis, and ethical issues related to human history, human behavior, and human values. In essence, Social Studies in the classroom investigates how and why people act, what they think, and where and how they live. It encompasses actions, ideas, values, time, and place across a broad and relatively unstructured range of topics, granting teachers considerable flexibility in selecting instructional materials and pedagogical approaches (Rahmawati & Zidni, 2019).

Learning is the process of making students learn by creating various learning models and engaging, meaningful learning environments. Learning is considered successful if students receive and master the material effectively (Sulfemi & Wahyu, 2019). Sugito states that education is of high quality if the learning process is carried out effectively and efficiently in all aspects, including teachers, students, learning objectives, learning materials, learning models, instructional tools and resources, and evaluation (Prawati, 2016).

Joyce and Wei explain that a learning model is a plan or pattern that can be used to design curricula, develop learning materials, and guide classroom instruction (Rusman, 2021). A learning model also serves as a guideline for planning classroom learning. A conceptual framework known as a learning model illustrates systematic ways to organize students' learning experiences to achieve specific learning objectives. Learning models also assist teachers and instructional designers in planning and implementing learning activities (Nurhayati Sri, 2024).

According to Kurniasih and Sani, the Discovery Learning model is an instructional approach in which students explore and uncover learning material while solving problems provided by the teacher, who serves as a facilitator throughout the process. In this model, students do not passively receive information but actively discover and construct their own knowledge. The advantages of implementing the Discovery Learning model include: (a) enhancing students' cognitive skills and processes, (b) producing knowledge that is unique and effective, thereby strengthening understanding, memory retention, and knowledge transfer, and (c) fostering a student-centered learning environment in which both teachers and students actively engage in discussions, with

teachers also taking on the roles of learners and researchers (Darma Putra & Sujana, 2020; Maulana et al., 2024).

At this stage, teachers can engage students in learning by applying the learning model in the classroom. The implementation process should be adapted to the material being taught, as each learning model has its own syntax and steps. This demonstrates that the learning model is one of the most effective factors in enhancing students' cognitive learning outcomes. When applied correctly, students are better able to understand the material, avoiding misunderstandings and low cognitive achievement.

Observations at SMP Negeri 30 Padang indicate that teaching activities still predominantly use conventional models. One conventional approach involves lectures and exercises. Teachers are less creative in adapting learning models to the material, causing students to feel bored, fatigued, and less motivated to learn.

Interviews with the IPS teacher (TR) confirmed that teaching has been dominated by lecture-based and direct instruction methods. Lectures are used because they are considered suitable for all materials; however, this is also due to the lack of available learning media. As a result, teachers rely on lectures and direct teaching methods.

Table 1. Social Studies Midterm Scores for Grade VIII Students

Class	Number of Students	KKTP	Score		Percentage	
			Pass	Fail	Pass	Fail
VIII A	33	80	29	4	87,88 %	12,12 %
VIII B	33	80	20	13	60,61 %	39,39 %
VIII C	33	80	19	14	57,58 %	42,42 %
VIII D	33	80	9	24	27,27 %	73,73 %
VIII E	33	80	17	16	51,52 %	48,48 %
VIII F	33	80	20	13	60,61 %	39,39 %
VIII G	33	80	17	16	51,52 %	48,48 %
VIII H	33	80	18	15	45,45 %	54,55 %
VIII I	33	80	28	5	84,85 %	15,15 %

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the midterm examination (MTE) scores of students are still below the Minimum Learning Competency Criteria (KKTP) for classes VIII.A-VIII.I. In particular, class VIII.D, which is the result of learning in the Social Studies (IPS) subject, shows low MTE scores. It was found that 73.73% of the students were categorized as failing, with 24 students not meeting the KKTP, while 27.27% of the students were considered to have passed, with 9 students achieving the KKTP.

Difficulties in understanding IPS lessons and poor study habits have caused students to be unmotivated to learn IPS, resulting in low learning outcomes. One of the factors contributing to the low IPS learning outcomes is the lack of student engagement during the teaching and learning process and the limited ability of teachers to deliver the learning material effectively. Another factor is the teacher's inaccuracy in planning and implementing the lessons (Nabillah & Abadi, 2019).

The low IPS learning outcomes can be caused by several factors, including the teaching models used by teachers. Ineffective learning models may lead students to become passive or disengaged in the classroom, resulting in suboptimal learning outcomes. The factors contributing to low student achievement in IPS can be categorized into three types, including internal factors (originating from the students), which encompass students' physical and mental conditions.

Based on these issues, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "Analysis of the Discovery Learning Model in Social Studies Instruction for Eighth-Grade Students at SMP

Negeri 30 Padang.” This study aims to apply the Discovery Learning model to improve the learning outcomes of eighth-grade students in the Social Studies (IPS) subject at SMP Negeri 30 Padang. Furthermore, the study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of more effective learning strategies at the junior high school level.

METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Social Studies (IPS) instruction for eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 30 Padang. Sugiyono (2016) explains that a qualitative approach is designed to understand phenomena holistically within their natural context by incorporating the perceptions and perspectives of research subjects, producing descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words as well as observable behaviors. The research type applied in this study is descriptive qualitative, with a focus on analyzing students’ learning processes and experiences.

Research Informants

The selection of informants was carried out using purposive sampling, a sampling method based on specific considerations. The informant criteria in this study included:

1. 8th-grade social studies teachers, because they are directly involved in the planning and implementation of the Discovery Learning model.
2. 8th-grade students of SMP Negeri 30 Padang, as the main subjects of learning activities. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews to explore their responses and perceptions of the learning model.

Data Types and Sources

The data sources used in this study include:

1. Primary data, such as observations, direct interviews with teachers and students, and other interactions during the learning process.
2. Secondary data, such as lesson plan documents (RPP), teaching modules, student grades, and other school archives (Balaka, 2022).

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used in this study included:

1. Direct observation, conducted to observe the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in the classroom. Observations were conducted on May 19, 2025, documenting the entire teaching and learning process.
2. In-depth, unstructured interviews with teachers and students aimed to gather more detailed information about their experiences and perceptions of the learning model.
3. Documentation, namely the collection of documents such as activity photos, lesson plans (RPP), and student grade lists (Mufida, 2020).

Unit of Analysis

In this study, the unit of analysis used by the researcher as a tool in the research process was the 8th grade students of SMP Negeri 30 Padang in the 2025/2026 academic year for Social Studies.

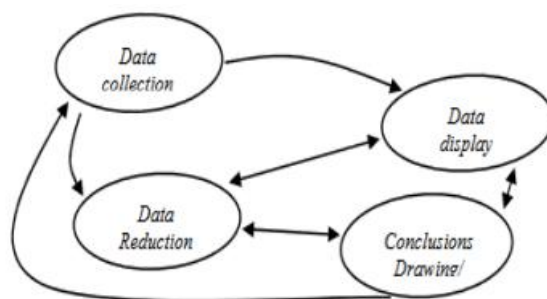


Figure 1. Data Analysis According to Miles and Huberman (Zulfirman, 2022)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Overview of the Social Studies Learning Process at SMP Negeri 30 Padang

SMP Negeri 30 Padang is strategically located in the urban area of Padang City, West Sumatra, and is easily accessible from various public facilities. The school is a driving school that has implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka since 2022 and received an A accreditation from BAN-S/M in 2019. The school has 62 educational staff members, with 6 teachers responsible for teaching Social Studies (IPS). The school facilities are adequate, including classrooms, laboratories, a library, prayer rooms, sports fields, and learning media that support the teaching and learning process.

Based on observations conducted on May 19 and interviews with IPS teachers, it was found that the IPS learning process in the classroom still predominantly uses conventional models such as lectures. This approach causes students to become passive, sleepy, and less interactive, which negatively affects their understanding of the material.

The Kurikulum Merdeka emphasizes the development of critical and contextual thinking skills. Therefore, teachers have begun to explore the Discovery Learning model to enhance student activity and engagement. This model is considered suitable because the school environment has social and cultural potential that supports contextual learning. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding students through the process of independently discovering concepts via discussions and group work.

Planning of the Discovery Learning Model in Eighth-Grade Classes

The implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Social Studies (IPS) for class VIII.D at SMP Negeri 30 Padang is carried out to enhance student activity and creativity. Prior to the learning process, teachers conduct thorough planning by preparing Teaching Modules and Student Worksheets (LKPD). These Teaching Modules include learning objectives and outcomes, learning activities (opening, core, and closing), assessments, reflections, as well as enrichment and remedial programs. Based on interviews with IPS teachers, the module preparation is carried out collaboratively within the MGMP forum to ensure completeness and content relevance.

The steps of the Discovery Learning model outlined in the module consist of stimulation, problem formulation, data collection, data processing, verification, and generalization. Teachers guide students through each stage, including providing repeated explanations for those who have not yet grasped the material. The selection of media, tools, materials, and learning resources is adjusted to meet instructional needs. One of the primary learning resources utilized is the IPS textbook aligned with the Kurikulum Merdeka, which serves to reinforce the material and support discovery activities within the Discovery Learning model. It can be concluded that lesson planning is essential for

teachers at SMP Negeri 30 Padang. This planning involves the preparation of Teaching Modules, Student Worksheets (LKPD), and other integrated instructional tools. The Teaching Modules contain learning activities, learning resources, the chosen learning model, and the systematic steps implemented throughout the instructional process.

Implementation of Learning Using the Discovery Learning Model in Eighth-Grade Classes

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the Discovery Learning model by IPS teachers in class VIII.D at SMP Negeri 30 Padang emphasizes student activity in acquiring new knowledge and promotes critical thinking skills, both individually and in groups. The learning process begins with the preliminary, core, and closing stages.

In the preliminary stage, the teacher creates a conducive learning environment by preparing students, linking previous material to new content, and conveying the learning objectives. Students are then divided into four study groups to analyze the impacts and benefits of international trade for Indonesia, as well as to identify supporting and inhibiting factors. Exploration, observation, data collection, and group discussion activities are conducted in a structured manner in accordance with the Discovery Learning approach.

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that during the preliminary learning activities, the teacher carried out orientation, apperception, motivation, and provision of guidance. Orientation was conducted with greetings and a collective prayer, while motivation was provided through an explanation of the day's learning plan. In the core activities, the teacher implemented the Discovery Learning model, which was well-received by the students. The learning process was supported by textbooks, Teaching Modules, and other supporting facilities that facilitated the understanding of the material. The steps of learning applied by the teacher in class VIII.D are as follows:

1. Stimulation

At the beginning of the core activities, the teacher provided learning stimulation by presenting descriptions and explanations related to the topic of international trade. The teacher encouraged students' understanding by asking guiding questions such as, "Does anyone know about this topic?" to foster curiosity about the subject being discussed. During the stimulation stage, the teacher also asked students to search for relevant literature to gather information regarding the export and import processes in international trade.

2. Problem Statement

In this step, the teacher asked students to formulate questions based on the explanations provided about the topic. The teacher guided the students to identify as many unresolved issues as possible, beginning with questions raised during group discussions. Directions were also given to ensure that students recognized multiple aspects of the topic that they had not yet fully understood. Next, the teacher asked students to identify information about international trade from the reading materials and relate it to their daily lives through group discussions.

3. Data Collection

The teacher provided Student Worksheets (LKPD) for students to conduct observations related to export and import activities in international trade, using textbooks from the library as references. During the information-gathering process, the teacher actively assisted groups experiencing difficulties, fostering interaction between the teacher and students as well as among group members. This activity encouraged student engagement and creativity in learning.

4. Data Processing

In the data processing stage, students managed the information they had previously collected and listened to a brief explanation from the teacher regarding the background of international trade, serving as a guide to better understand and organize their answers.

5. Verification

At this stage, students presented the results of their discussions to verify the accuracy of the data. The teacher facilitated the process and asked representatives from other groups to engage in question-and-answer sessions to stimulate curiosity and mutual respect. After the presentations, students submitted their discussion reports on time. Each group presented their results in turn, followed by opportunities for other groups to respond or ask questions.

6. Generalization

Based on the observations during the conclusion stage, students, with guidance from the teacher, summarized their understanding of the material on the background of international trade that they had learned collaboratively in groups.

Analysis of the Implementation of the Discovery Learning Model in IPS Learning

This study analyzed the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in the IPS subject for class VIII.D at SMP Negeri 30 Padang. The findings from the data collection are summarized as follows:

1. Direct Observation

During face-to-face learning, students were actively involved in group discussions, data collection, and presentations, demonstrating high levels of participation and collaboration. The teacher facilitated all stages of the Discovery Learning model, including stimulation, problem formulation, data collection, data processing, verification, and generalization. Observers noted that although some students initially struggled to follow all the steps, they gradually adapted and became more confident, engaging actively with continuous guidance and feedback from the teacher. These observations indicate that the Discovery Learning model promotes understanding of the material, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills within the classroom environment.

2. In-Depth Interviews

- **Teacher's Perspective (Mrs. Rony):** The Discovery Learning model is more engaging than the traditional lecture method and motivates previously passive students to participate actively in learning activities.
- **Students' Perspectives (Irfan, Angel, and Raffa):** Students reported that learning using this model feels easier to understand, encourages cooperation among peers, enhances enthusiasm, and strengthens their sense of responsibility and confidence during group activities. These responses confirm that students perceive the model as effective in increasing both understanding and engagement.

3. Documentation

Lesson plans (RPP) and student worksheets (LKPD) confirmed that the steps of the Discovery Learning model were implemented systematically throughout the learning process. These instructional documents explicitly outlined each stage of the model, ensuring that both teachers and students had a structured guide to follow during lessons. Observational notes and photographs of

classroom activities further demonstrated students' active participation and collaboration, including engaging in discussions, presenting findings, and assisting one another in completing tasks. This evidence shows that the model effectively involves learners in both individual and group tasks, fosters critical thinking, and supports the development of social and collaborative skills.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of the Discovery Learning Model in IPS Learning in Class VIII at SMP Negeri 30 Padang

In implementing the Discovery Learning model, both supporting and inhibiting factors influence the effectiveness of the learning process. Based on observations and interviews, student enthusiasm emerged as the primary supporting factor. Students actively participated in discussions, collaborated in groups, and demonstrated strong learning motivation. This was evident from student statements expressing enjoyment in working with peers, having clearly defined roles within the group, and perceiving the learning process as more engaging and interactive.

Teacher support was also identified as an important contributor. The IPS teacher noted that the Discovery Learning model enhances learning efficiency and stimulates student engagement, although ongoing guidance is necessary to maintain the relevance of the content. The teacher actively assisted students during discussions and provided clarification when misunderstandings occurred.

Nonetheless, several challenges were encountered. One major obstacle was limited time, as the multiple stages of the model stimulation, problem identification, data collection and processing, verification, and generalization require a relatively long allocation of instructional time. Furthermore, differences in students' ability to follow the learning steps posed difficulties, particularly for those who struggled with scientific thinking processes.

To address these issues, the teacher developed a more structured learning scenario and incorporated digital learning media to enhance time efficiency. The teacher also provided targeted guidance to students who were less active or experienced confusion during group activities, ensuring that all learners were optimally engaged in the learning process.

Discussion

Research findings at SMP Negeri 30 Padang reveal that the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Grade VIII Social Studies (IPS) has positively impacted both the learning process and student achievement. This approach encourages students to actively participate in learning through direct experiences, moving them away from being passive recipients of information delivered solely by the teacher. The instructional pattern, which was previously one-directional and dominated by the lecture method, has shifted toward a more interactive and participatory format. This shift is reflected in the increased engagement of both students and teachers in exploring subject matter, whether through individual activities or collaborative group work.

The implementation of this model follows six core stages: stimulation, problem identification, data collection, data processing, verification, and conclusion drawing. In this process, the teacher acts as a facilitator who guides students in independently discovering concepts through various exploratory activities. Observations during the learning process showed increased student activity, greater curiosity, and the development of critical and analytical thinking skills.

These findings align with various previous studies demonstrating the effectiveness of Discovery Learning in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. For example, research by Handayani (2016) at SMP Negeri 2 Ngemplak, Sleman, recorded an increase in classical mastery from 32% to 90% after two learning cycles using this model. Similar results were obtained by Yuni Kunestri et al. (2022) at SMPN 1 Margoyoso, where mastery improved from 32% to 90% through the same approach. Both studies showed that discovery-based learning effectively encourages active

participation and significantly improves academic achievement.

A similar study conducted at MTsN 2 also showed a positive impact of Discovery Learning on the activeness of Grade VIII IPS students. Before implementation, many students displayed low focus during lessons, such as chatting with friends, daydreaming, or frequently leaving the classroom. However, after two classroom action research cycles, a significant increase in student activeness was recorded. Indicators included focusing on the teacher's explanation, actively answering and asking questions, participating in discussions, and expressing ideas in problem-solving. In cycle I, only 24% of students were active, while 44% were less active and 32% were inactive. In cycle II, active participation increased dramatically to 91%, with only 9% categorized as less active. These results reinforce the findings at SMP Negeri 30 Padang that Discovery Learning can create participatory learning and empower students holistically cognitively, and socially (Safitri & Siti Azizah, 2023).

Support for the model's effectiveness is also seen in the research of Noviani et al. (2015) at SMP Negeri 2 Abung Tinggi, which showed that Discovery Learning significantly influenced students' motivation to learn IPS, with a coefficient of determination of 0.98, indicating a very strong relationship between the learning model and increased participation. Furthermore, Edo (2022), in his study at SMP Negeri 2 Bajawa, found that students' average scores rose from 62 to 79, and learning mastery improved from 39% to 87% after two cycles of implementation. These findings confirm that Discovery Learning not only improves quantitative learning outcomes but also strengthens students' engagement in understanding the social contexts discussed in IPS learning.

Overall, the consistency of these research results with previous studies indicates that the Discovery Learning model plays a crucial role not only in improving students' cognitive aspects but also in developing affective and psychomotor domains. Through activities such as observation, discussion, and analysis, students are encouraged to construct knowledge independently, making the concepts learned more meaningful. The teacher's role as a facilitator allows students to explore information, process data, and connect new knowledge with their experiences and social realities. This approach aligns with the characteristics of IPS subjects, which emphasize not only conceptual mastery but also the development of social values and civic attitudes.

Nevertheless, this study also found several challenges in implementing Discovery Learning, such as limited instructional time, differences in students' academic abilities, and a lack of variety in available learning media. These constraints are consistent with previous findings that highlight the importance of teacher readiness, adequate learning resources, and careful lesson planning for effective implementation. The success of this model largely depends on institutional support, the professional competence of teachers, and the availability of adequate learning facilities.

In conclusion, the use of the Discovery Learning model in IPS learning at SMP Negeri 30 Padang has been proven to improve the quality of the learning process. The consistency of this study's results with various prior research reinforces the conclusion that this model is highly suitable for IPS learning, which requires connecting instructional content with students' social life dynamics. Therefore, the implementation of Discovery Learning should be further developed through systematic planning and continuous support from various stakeholders to make IPS learning more effective, enjoyable, and meaningful for students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, it can be concluded that Social Studies (IPS) learning in Grade VIII at SMP Negeri 30 Padang has implemented the Discovery Learning model, a learning approach that involves forming small groups

with different materials under the same theme. The implementation of this model has been proven to enhance students' activeness, creativity, and understanding, particularly on the topic of the Nusantara spice trade routes up to the colonial era. Supporting factors identified in the implementation include the active engagement of students in exploration and group discussions, which foster critical thinking skills and the ability to draw conclusions. The main obstacles are the limited instructional time and the difficulties some students face during the initial stages of learning. Therefore, it is recommended that schools support the application of active learning models by providing adequate facilities, offering professional development for teachers, and fostering a learning culture that encourages student participation. Teachers are expected to continue developing and implementing innovative models such as Discovery Learning that meet students' needs while creating a conducive classroom environment for the discovery process. Students are also encouraged to think critically, collaborate in groups, and confidently express their opinions to optimize their understanding and skills.

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