Edge deletion in fragment commands

Abstract

Certain fragments which contain goals can be used as commands despite not having an overt verb, such as "Feet on the floor!" and "Hands up!" I will show that these goal commands (GCs) are derived from full imperative clauses via an unusual process of deletion on the edge. I propose that English GCs require a get-type verb, and subsequently elide all material to the left of the first nominal head within the verb's theme. Standard accounts of ellipsis, such as Merchant (2001), designed to account for phenomena such as *VP ellipsis*, cannot account for or produce this type of deletion. Based on data from Japanese, I will propose that the direction of this deletion is conditioned by the location of C^0. English, with a head-initial C^0, deletes to the left. Japanese, with a head-final C^0, deletes to the right. I draw a parallel between this type of edge deletion and other instances of edge deletion, such as left-edge diary deletion in English and right-edge case deletion in Korean.

Keywords: *imperative, deletion, ellipsis, fragments, goal, English, Japanese, Korean*

1 Introduction

There has been a rich history of formal investigation into the properties of imperative clauses (Bolinger 1967; Sadock & Zwicky 1985; Davies 1986; Portner 2007; Aikhenvald 2010; Kaufmann 2012; Zanuttini et al. 2012; Alcázar & Saltarelli 2014, among many others). A great deal of progress has been made within these works in discovering the morphosyntactic and semanto-pragmatic properties associated with imperative clauses. The object of study within this previous work has typically been imperative clauses like (1) below, which has a verb that bears imperative morphology.[1]

(1) Paint those walls!

Imperative clauses are typically considered to be part of a general language-wide *clause-type systems* (Sadock & Zwicky 1985, Portner 2004), of which declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives are the most typical members.

Significantly less attention has been paid, however, to the fact that there exists a class of expressions quite similar to imperatives that do not express any overt verb. Below are examples of such utterances.[2]

[1] In many languages, English being among them, the imperative morpheme is minimally inflected, or null (Sadock & Zwicky 1985; Aikhenvald 2010). Languages often do mark imperative verbs with an overt morpheme, however, as in (1) below.

(1) minyma panti-**ma**
still sit-IMP
'Sit still!' Panyjima (Dench 1991)

[2] GCs are not the only type of verbless imperative that exists.

(2) a. Feet on the floor, now!
b. Hands where I can see them!
c. Hands to yourselves!
d. Hands up!
e. Out of my sight!
f. Into the woods!
g. Down, boy!
h. Up yours!
i. Jokes to yourself, buddy!

This paper will be a formal investigation into the properties of utterances like those in (2) above, which I term GOAL COMMANDS (GCs). I will argue that GCs are derived from full imperative clauses, but that rather than merely omitting the verb, they undergo a process of edge deletion which deletes all material on their left edge. The essential argument proposed in this paper, therefore, is that utterances like (3a) and (4a) are derived from (3b) and (4b) respectively.[3]

(3) a. Books on the shelf!
b. ~~Get those~~ books on the shelf!

(4) a. Jokes to yourself, buddy!
b. ~~Keep your~~ jokes to yourself, buddy!

Doing so situates this analysis within a growing body of work that recognizes deletion processes that are sensitive to linear order (Weir 2022; An 2019). I will propose that a GC like (3a) is derived from the imperative in (3b) through a process of edge deletion that deletes all material to the left of *books*, including determiners, adverbs, negation and the subject. In (3b) this means that the verb and the demonstrative 'those' are deleted. Although the exact nature of this process remains somewhat mysterious, in Section 5 I will show that the directionality of this process is language-specific; Korean deletion on the right has already been noted by An (2016, 2019). This process is limited to verbs that select goal complements, which I call *get-type* verbs. Non-goal PPs are ungrammatical in GCs, because the requisite class of verbs (*get, put, keep*, etc.) do not select such complements.

(5) a. *Books about Rome! (c.f., "Books to Rome!")
b. *Books of Paris!

(1) a. (Surgeon to assistant) Scalpel.
b. (Librarian to visitors) Silence!

It remains to be seen whether or not there can be a unified account of each verbless imperative. My focus will be limited herein to verbless imperatives that express a theme and a goal.

[3]Note that these are only possible derivations. (3a) could also be derived from "Put those books on the shelf!"

c. *Get those books about Rome!

The format of the paper is as follows: Section 2 will establish that GCs are members of the IMPERATIVE clause type in all meaningful respects. Section 3 will show that English GCs have a restriction where material cannot overtly appear to the left of the theme. Section 4 will formalize this by introducing a prosodic feature associated with urgent commands and get-type verbs that conditions deletion from the left edge to the theme. Section 5 will extend this analysis to Japanese and Korean, arguing that the same analysis can also derive the Japanese and Korean patterns, but in the opposite direction, supporting a linear deletion analysis rather than a constituency deletion analysis. Section 6 concludes.

2 Imperative Properties of Goal Commands

This section will discuss the properties of GCs, concluding that GCs pattern with imperatives with respect to their semanto-pragmatic update. A constant analogy is drawn between GCs and what have traditionally been referred to as "imperatives" in the literature. As such, I use the term "traditional imperative" (TI) to refer to an utterance like (6a) below that has an overt verb, and "goal command," or "GC," to refer to an utterance like (6b) below, which does not.

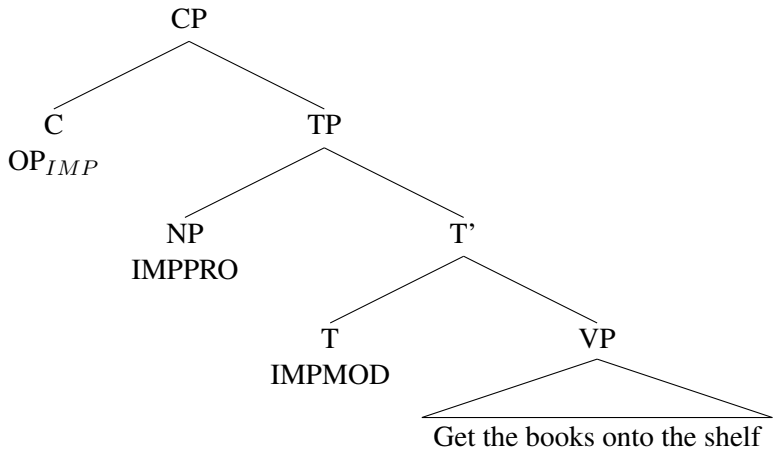
(6) a. Don't look back in anger! (Traditional Imperative)
b. Books onto the shelf! (Goal Command)

Following standard nomenclature for ditransitives (e.g., Larson (1988)), I will refer to the argument exemplified by 'books' above in (6b) as the THEME of the GC, and the argument 'on the shelf' above as the GOAL of the GC.

The following is a sketch of the extended clause structure for TIs that I will be adopting here, with an imperative operator, an imperative modal, and a covert imperative subject.[4] This clause structure will be highly relevant, as the main argument will be that GCs are derived from TIs. IMPPRO stands for a covert imperative subject, and IMPMOD stands for a covert, underspecified imperative modal.

[4]Although I utilize an imperative operator, I do not mean to exclude other theories of imperative meaning, such as Portner (2004, 2007), in which imperatives denote properties. I believe that the generalizations about GCs being formally truncated imperatives are applicable to most theories of imperative meaning.

(7)



By arguing that GCs are derived from TIs, I am placing GCs as a member of imperative clause type, as opposed to declarative or interrogative. The remainder of this section serves as justification for this decision.

2.1 Imperative Performativity

Unlike declaratives and interrogatives, imperatives are obligatorily *performative*, in the sense originally described by Austin (1962), who lays out the following two properties of performative utterances.

(8) They do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, and are not 'true or false.'

(9) The uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action,

Austin (1962), pg 5 (A and B)

Imperatives are therefore typically considered to canonical examples of performative utterances because they cannot be considered true or false under normal conditions, and they are used to *do* something rather than merely report something.

One way of deriving this performativity is by positing the existence of an operator that is present in all imperatives. Kaufmann (2012) argues that imperatives are actually underlyingly truth-conditionally equivalent to modal statements with *should*, but that the former are obligatorily accompanied by a performative operator while the latter are not. Under this view, therefore, the following utterances have essentially the same truth conditions.[5]

(10) a. Paint the walls!

b. You should paint the walls.

Imperatives like (10a) are always performative, whereas modal statements like (10b) are not necessarily so. For example, TIs cannot be followed with replies making reference to truth and falsity, but modal statements can.

(11) a. A: Paint those walls! (TI)
B: #That's (not) true!

[5]The argument that imperatives have truth conditions at all is far from universally accepted. See Portner (2004, 2007) for an alternative view, that does not make use of an operator in imperatives.

b. A: You should paint those walls!
   B: That's (not) true!

Modal operator accounts argue that this difference is caused by a series of presuppositions that accompany imperatives but not modal statements. These presuppositions ensure that the context is sufficiently performative.[6] Under Kaufmann's account, adapted by Keshet & Medeiros (2019), the following four presuppositions accompany the imperative operator when taking a modal base *f*, an ordering source *g*, and a proposition *p*.

(12) Non-past constraint The time at which *p* takes place must not be entirely in the past. (Kaufmann 2012: Sect. 3.2.2)

(13) Authority condition The speaker must be in a privileged position with respect to the truth of $[\![\text{OP}_{IMP}\ \text{f}\ \text{g}\ ]\!]$, either as an authority figure or as a knowledgeable expert. (Kaufmann 2012: Section 4.2.2)

(14) Epistemic uncertainty constraint It is unknown whether *p(w)* is true or false before the imperative is uttered. (Kaufmann 2012: Section 4.2.3)

(15) Ordering Source Restriction The imperative must address a salient decision problem *D*, and the speaker and addressee must consider *g* to be the relevant ordering source for resolving *D*. (Kaufmann 2012: Section 4.2.3)

I will adopt an imperative operator that carries these four presuppositions in this paper. The remainder of this subsection, therefore, will serve to show that each of these presuppositions is active in GCs, and that it is therefore reasonable to consolidate this account, originally developed for TIs, in analyzing GCs. Note that this performativity *could* be derived via other mechanisms (e.g., the "To-Do List" in Portner 2004), but the point would stand regardless that GCs pattern with TIs. The primary goal here is not to argue for one specific theory of imperatives, but to show that GCs generally pattern with TIs and that a popular account of imperative performativity is also compatible with GCs.

2.1.1 Non-Past Constraint

Kaufmann (2012) argues that imperatives are not compatible with times contained entirely in the past. This is presumably because the performative object created by a successful utterance of an imperative is incompatible with the addressee's inability to affect the past.[7]

(16) a. #Paint the walls yesterday!
   b. Paint the walls now!
   c. #Hand me that pen last year!

[6]For Kaufmann (2012) and Oikonomou (2016), this operator also provides modal semantics, similar to *should* and *want* for each respective account. Keshet & Medeiros (2019) separate this modal meaning from the operator, leaving just the presuppositions. I set the question of the semantics of this operator aside here, and focus on its pragmatic consequences.

[7]Some languages have been argued to have legitimate past-tense imperatives, but these constructions mean "You should have done X." (cf. Mastop 2005 for Dutch, Rubio-Vallejo 2017 for Spanish.)

d. Hand me that pen as quickly as you can!

GCs are subject to the same constraint as TIs; they are completely incompatible with past tense modification, presumably because addressees are not able to affect past actions. Combinations of GCs with past tense modifiers are uniformly infelicitous.

(17) a. #Books off the shelf yesterday!
b. Books off the shelf now!
c. #Hands where I can see them last year!
d. Hands where I can see them as quickly as you can!

2.1.2 Authority Condition

The AUTHORITY CONDITION is a condition that states that by virtue of uttering an imperative, the speaker is presupposed to be an authority over the relevant rules.[8] Keshet & Medeiros (2019) point out that the following utterance is infelicitous, presumably because the context makes it clear that the speaker cannot be an authority over the relevant rule.

(18) #Go to your room, Dad! (spoken by a 2 year old)

The AUTHORITY CONDITION necessitates that the speaker of an imperative like (18) possesses the necessary social authority to command the addressee. The same holds for a GC, the speaker must possess the relevant social authority to command the addressee.

(19) a. #Books off the shelf, Dad! (spoken by a 2 year old)

One consequence of the AUTHORITY CONDITION is that imperatives do not have accessible truth conditions. This is because follow-ups regarding truth and falsity are automatically evaluated with respect to the speaker's desires, which are presupposed. This means that saying "That's (not) true!" in response to an imperative is interpreted as the questioning the speaker's desires, which is a strange conversational move. We have already seen that TIs cannot be replied to with direct reference to truth or falsity. GCs exhibit an identical effect.

(20) Out of the woods!
B: #That's (not) true!

2.1.3 Epistemic Uncertainty Constraint

The EPISTEMIC UNCERTAINTY constraint is a presupposition to the effect that the speaker must believe that both $p(w)$ and $\neg p(w)$ are possible before uttering an imperative. In essence, imperatives are infelicitous if the speaker knows that the content of the imperative is either impossible or inevitable. This makes sequences such as the following incoherent for TIs.

(21) a. #I know you will do this no matter what, so do it also.

[8] Kaufmann (2012) also has in mind that the speaker can be a *knowledgeable expert*, which derives certain ADVICE readings. Advice readings are not applicable in the case of GCs, as will be discussed in Section 4.1.

b. #I know you won't be able to do this, but do it anyway.

(adapted from Kaufmann (2012))

Because performative utterances necessitate that the addressee be committed to some course of action in the world, they are infelicitous in situations where the speaker believes that the outcome of the event is certain in either direction. GCs are subject to an identical constraint; the speaker must believe that it is possible that the content of the GC be fulfilled.

(22) a. #Books onto the shelf! (Speaker knows the books will not fit)

b. #I know you will move the books no matter what, having said that, books on the shelf!

2.1.4 Ordering Source Restriction

The ORDERING SOURCE RESTRICTION is a restriction that commits both the speaker and addressee to believing that *p* constitutes a possible answer to the best course of events, construed as a decision problem *D*. Thus, sequences like (23) are infelicitous for TIs.

(23) Call Melli! #But I don't want you to call her. (Kaufmann 2012: pg. 158)

The imperative in (23) introduces "A_c calls Melli" as an answer to the decision problem in this context. Doing so automatically commits both the speaker and addressee to believing that calling Melli is somehow an answer to the problem of how to best proceed. Thus, if the speaker subsequently denies that this is a good course of action, it results in infelicity.

Following our established trend, GCs act the same as TIs with regard to the restriction on the ordering source. Sequences like the following (24) are infelicitous.

(24) Books on the shelf! #But I don't want the books to be on the shelf.

The fact that each of these presuppositions are present in GCs indicates to me that GCs are subject to the same general discourse conditions as TIs. Following Han (1998), Kaufmann (2012) and Oikonomou (2016), I will therefore make use of an imperative operator and place it in C^0.

2.2 Imperative Modal

One of the first serious treatments of imperatives in the generative linguistics literature, Katz & Postal (1964), argues for a covert *will* in the structure of imperatives, based partly on the future-orientation. Bolinger (1967) argues against this, however, by noting that a variety of tags are compatible with imperatives.[9]

(25) a. Hand me that book, will you? / would you? / could you?

b. Paint those walls, will you? / would you? / could you?

[9]The observation of flexible tags in imperatives goes back at least to Jespersen (1946), who notes the token "Be quiet, can't you?" from Charles Dickens' novel *The Pickwick Papers*.

It is typically argued that the subject and modal in English tags must match the material that is present in spec TP and T^0 (Culicover 1992; Bruening 2016). Applying this logic to the data in (25) yields the result that English TIs have a covert, syntactically represented subject "you," but that there are several possible covert modals.

Much like TIs, GCs are compatible with tags, and the modal possibilities in tags are identical to those originally noted for TIs by Bolinger.

(26) a. Books off the table, will you? / would you? / could you?
b. Feet on the floor, will you? / would you? / could you?

The only subject tag that is possible in GCs is "you." It might initially be plausible to consider that "books" is the subject of a GC like (26a) above. However, the tag "they" is not permissible with GCs, showing that the syntactic subject is "you."

(27) *Books off the table, will they? / would they? / could they?

Based on the fact that both constructions permit the same range of modals, the simplest analysis is that they contain the same underlying modal. Although the exact status of this modal is uncertain, I will follow Kaufmann (2012) in positing an unpronounceable, underspecified modal element present in imperatives. I use the term IMPMOD here, but the modal element in TIs must be identical to that of GCs, given the identical range of possibilities.

2.3 Syntactic Subject

To this point, I have simply used "you" as a placeholder for the imperative subject, based on data from tags. It is well-known that the subject of TI clauses is restricted to being some subset of the addressees. Zanuttini (2008) shows that imperatives can bind 2nd person pronouns even with 3rd person subjects (28), an option which is not possible in declaratives or interrogatives (29).

(28) a. Everyone$_i$ raise his$_i$ / her$_i$/ their$_i$ / your$_i$ hand!
b. Someone$_i$ raise his$_i$ / her$_i$ / their$_i$ / your$_i$ hand!

(29) a. Everyone$_i$ should raise his$_i$/her$_i$/their$_i$/*your$_i$ hand.
b. Should everyone$_i$ raise his$_i$/her$_i$/their$_i$/*your$_i$ hand? (Zanuttini 2008)

In addition, Zwicky (1988) shows that TIs with covert subjects always act as if the subject was 2nd person, and never 1st or 3rd person.

(30) a. Make yourself / yourselves a drink!
b. Make each other a drink!
c. *Make ourselves a drink!
d. *Make themselves a drink! (Zwicky 1988)

Using 1st or 3rd person reflexive pronouns results in a Condition A violation (30c, 30d). Using a 2nd person non-reflexive pronoun in a TI results in a Condition B violation.

(31) *Make you a drink!

All of these facts lead to the conclusion that there is a syntactically projected subject with 2nd person features that is present in TIs. This subject binds the 2nd person reflexives in (30a) and (30b), and blocks a 2nd person non-reflexive in (31).

GCs show the same pattern as TIs. 2nd person reflexives are possible, while 1st and 3rd person reflexive pronouns produce a Condition A violation.

(32) a. Hands off yourselves!
b. Hands off each other!
c. *Hands off myself!
d. *Hands off themselves!

Much like TIs, 2nd person non-reflexive pronouns produce a Condition B violation. 1st and 3rd non-reflexive pronouns are grammatical.

(33) a. *Hands off you!
b. Hands off me!
c. Hands off them!

Following Wratil (2005) and Kaufmann (2012), I place the covert subject pronoun IMPPRO in subjectless imperatives. This pronoun is restricted to denoting the addressee, bears 2nd person syntactic features, and alternates with overt 2nd person subjects. The semantics of IMPPRO are provided below, originally given by Kaufmann (2012), for both singular and plural imperative subjects.

(34) a. $[\![\text{IMPPRO}]\!]^c = C_A$.
b. $[\![\text{IMPPRO}^{pl}]\!]^c = C_A$ iff C_A is a plural individual. Otherwise undefined.

The purpose of this section has been to show that GCs pattern with TIs in a variety of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic respects. GCs display the same tag options as TIs, are performative in the same way as TIs, and have the same binding possibilities available to them. As such, I analyze GCs as containing three imperative elements that have been argued to exist in TIs: an imperative operator, an imperative subject, and an imperative modal.

GCs are not identical to TIs, however. In the next section, I will show that GCs undergo a process of left-edge deletion, that deletes any material that would appear to the left of the first lexical head in the theme.

3 Left-Edge Effects

In this section, I will show that there is a variety of material that cannot precede the theme of a GC. This data will show that GCs cannot merely involve omitting the verb alone, but actually the entire left edge of the clause. This will lead to a proposal where there is left-edge deletion up to the theme.

3.1 Subject

One of the hallmarks of IMPPRO is its ability to alternate with an overt subject pronoun in TIs, at least in English.[10]

(35) a. Don't (you) touch that newspaper collection!
b. (You) run along now!

Unlike TIs, GCs can never pronounce their subject. Any attempt to overtly pronounce one of the options for imperative subjects is ungrammatical in a GC.[11]

(36) a. **You* feet on the floor!
b. **Everybody* feet on the floor!
c. **Someone* feet on the floor!
d. **Those in front* feet on the floor!

GCs therefore do not pattern with TIs in their ability to overtly pronounce their subject. Does this constitute evidence that GCs are not actually derived from TIs? I will argue that the reason why GCs cannot express an overt subject, but TIs can, is that GCs involve an additional process of deletion that TIs do not. To help make this case, I will next show that negation, adverbs and determiners are all unacceptable in this position as well.

3.2 Negation

TIs can be negated in modern English by including *don't*. Doing so has no morphological consequences in English, which uses a bare form for the verb in both positive and negative TIs.

(37) a. Paint the walls!
b. Don't paint the walls!

Although languages differ in their strategies to negate TIs, every language has *some* available form to express the meaning in (37b) above. GCs, on the other hand, are not compatible with *don't*, or indeed any negation at all. Every single negation available in English is incompatible with GCs.

(38) a. Hands up!
b. **Don't* hands up!
c. **Not* hands up!
d. **Do not* hands up!
e. **No* hands up!

[10] It is relatively common for languages to require omission of the imperative subject. See Aikhenvald (2010) for a full overview.

[11] See Potsdam (2017) for an overview of possible imperative subjects in English.

In a recent paper, Iatridou (2021) addresses an imperative-like construction similar to (38e) above, which she calls Negation Licensed Commands (NLCs). Donovan (2022) discusses several ways in which NLCs differ from the type of GCs that are discussed here. For example, NLCs can be addressed indirectly in a way that TIs and GCs never can, due to the fact that they have existential subjects (Akkuş 2021). Consider the following scenario. There is a rule in the bar against smoking. Some of the patrons break the rule late at night, but the wait staff never breaks the rule. The owner can felicitously utter (39a), but not (39b), to the wait staff.

(39) a. Remember, no smoking in here. (NLC)
b. #Remember, don't smoke in here. (TI)

GCs pattern with the TI in (39b) above in that they cannot be used indirectly. I will therefore treat NLCs as separate from GCs.[12] If this is the case, it means that negation is truly incompatible with GCs. It is hard to imagine that this incompatibility is somehow semantic in nature. After all, it is possible to negate a TI with an almost identical meaning to the one in (38a).

(40) Don't get your hands up!

It is also possible to reverse the preposition without using negation to achieve the opposite meaning.

(41) Hands down!

The impossibility of negation alongside the impossibility of overt subjects is striking, given that the two do not form any obvious constituent or natural class. One property that they share is that they surface to the left of the GC theme.

3.3 Adverbs

The position of adverbs is relatively unrestricted in TIs, either preceding or succeeding the verb, and either preceding or succeeding arguments like prepositional phrases.[13]

(42) a. *Immediately* get your feet on the floor!
b. Get your feet *immediately* on the floor!
c. Get your feet on the floor *immediately*!

The position of adverbs is more restricted in GCs than in TIs, in exactly the same way that subjects and negation are restricted. Adverbs can appear in all the positions that are available in TIs, with the exception that they cannot appear to the left of the theme.

(43) a. *Immediately feet on the floor!
b. Feet immediately on the floor!
c. Feet on the floor immediately!

[12] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the superficial similarity between the GCs and NLCs.

[13] Of course, not all adverbs have an identical syntactic distribution. I will stick to the adverb "immediately" here. For more on adverb positions, see Cinque (1999) and Payne (2018).

3.4 Determiners

Determiners are possible, and typically required, in TIs with *get-type* verbs.

(44) Get *the* books on the shelf!

Despite the fact that determiners are generally available with *get-type* verbs in TIs, each of the determiners below is ungrammatical in GCs.[14]

(45) a. *The books on the table!
b. *Your hands where I can see them!
c. *Some cats in the carrier!

Note that determiners are allowed in GCs, but not to the left of the theme. The determiners within the goal are not only allowed, but actually obligatory.

(46) Books on *(the) shelf!

This means that GCs cannot merely be some form of telegraphic speech that omits determiners, such as the headline of a newspaper. Instead, there is an entire class of objects, which includes determiners, which cannot appear on the left edge of a GC.

Interestingly, GC themes are interpreted as definite despite the fact that definite determiners are ungrammatical. When a determiner is not present in a TI, it can only be interpreted non-specifically (e.g., Put books on the shelf! = *some books*) The meaning of the GC in (47) below, however, must reference specific books that are relevant in a certain context.

(47) (There is a pile of 12 books laying on the ground)
A: Books on the shelf!
✓: B puts every book from the pile on the shelf.
X: B puts half the books from the pile on the shelf.

Given that other material is not acceptable on the left edge, it follows that determiners may also not be acceptable for the same reason. This fact also helps support a mystery surrounding GCs. An astute reader may have noticed that reflexive pronouns are ungrammatical as the GC theme.

(48) *Yourself into the chopper!

This fact actually follows from the fact that determiners are deleted in GCs. This data supports the conclusion reached by Helke (1973) that English reflexives have the internal structure of possessive NPs. Given that possessives are typically analyzed as determiners, and reflexive

[14] An anonymous reviewer points out that demonstratives may be marginally acceptable in GCs. However, each informant that I asked marked them as completely ungrammatical, except in the case of contrast (1b). Even so, most found them highly dispreferred.

(1) a. *Those books on the table!
b. ???*Those* books on the table, *these* on the shelf!

pronouns require a possessive element in English, reflexive pronouns are generally ungrammatical in theme position.

The conclusion to this point is, therefore, that GCs pattern with TIs in all relevant respects, except when it comes to material appearing to the left of the GC theme. Subjects and negation are always ungrammatical in GCs, because the only available position for them is to the left of the theme. Adverbs and determiners are grammatical only when they are not to the left of the theme. The next section will sketch an analysis of that involves obligatory edge deletion of material on the left.

4 Edge deletion with get-type Verbs

Any analysis of GCs must account for their left-edge effects and goal-orientation, as well as their more general imperative-like behavior. I will propose that GCs are derived from imperative clauses with a get-type verb. This get-type imperative clause will then delete the entire left part of the clause up to the theme. This is reliant on a prosodic feature carried by urgent commands.

I will spell out an analysis involving the following parts:

(49) A prosodic feature, [+α], that is introduced by URGENT COMMAND prosody and get-type verbs. When this feature is checked, all phonological material preceding the theme is deleted.

(50) A get-type verb, which subcategorizes for a goal, and optionally a theme, argument, as well as assigning its [+α] feature to all lexical heads in its complement.

(51) An automatic PF process which deletes all phonological material, starting from the first [+α] and ending at the second [+α], which is initiated only when there is an [+α] feature on the ProsP and the NP.

Below in (52) is a sketch of this deletion process, starting at the first [+α] feature and stopping at the second [+α] feature. I use crossed out material to indicate phonological deletion throughout.

(52) [$_{ProsP}$ URGENT COMMAND.....~~You~~.....[$_{VP}$ ~~get~~ [$_{NP}$ ~~the~~ books][$_{PP}$ on....]]]
[+α] ⟶ [+α]

The deletion exemplified in (52) is dependent on each of the elements discussed in (49) - (51). I will discuss the necessity of each of these subparts in what follows in this section.

4.1 Goal Commands are always urgent

As Kaufmann (2012) and Von Fintel & Iatridou (2017) point out, the most typical use associated with imperatives is typically COMMANDING. Nevertheless, TIs are associated with a range of uses available to them, outside of the canonical use as commands, participating in at least WISH and PERMISSION uses as well.

(53) a. Hand me that baton! (Command)

b. Please don't rain tomorrow! (Wish)

c. Have a cookie, if you like. (Permission)

Kaufmann's semantic analysis of the imperative operator is designed to account for this range of uses, by allowing the discourse context to interact with the meaning of the imperative operator. Though accounting for a range of uses is highly useful for an analysis of TIs, allowing for a flexible range of uses would overgenerate in the case of GCs. GCs can only be used as commands, and the other uses available to TIs are unavailable to GCs.

(54) a. Books on the shelf! (Command)

b. #Package in the mailbox! (Wish)

c. #Books on the shelf, if you like! (Permission)

Compared with a TI like "Please be in the mailbox!" GCs cannot be used for the purpose of wishing (54b). As for (54c), the permissive modifier *if you like*, which forces a permissive reading in TIs is not acceptable with GCs.

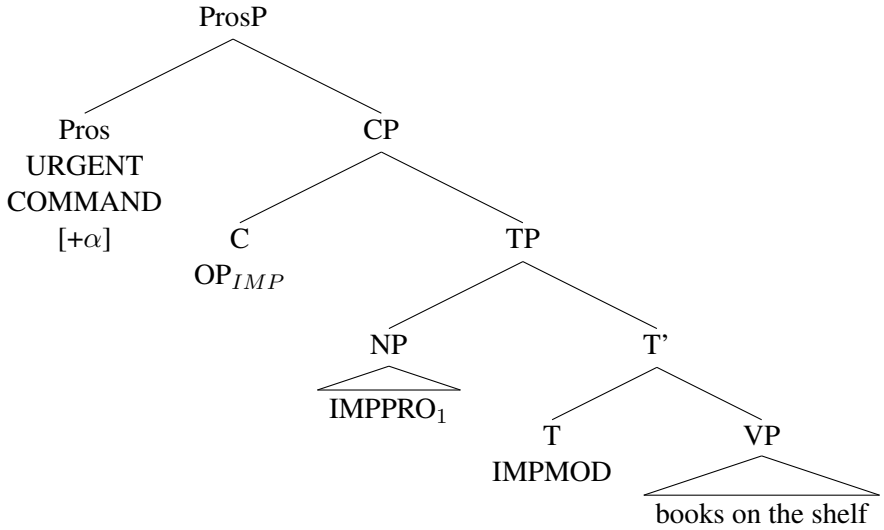
One possible explanation for this narrowing of uses is that the deletion present in GCs is dependent on the utterance having the prosody of an URGENT COMMAND. In terms of pragmatic force, English speakers surveyed provide the intuition that, while GCs and traditional command imperatives are very similar in their meaning, GCs have an additional strength or harshness associated with them. Thus, the difference between the following two utterances seems to be that (55b) is interpreted as more urgent.

(55) a. Get the books on the shelf!

b. Books on the shelf!

Because of this, I will utilize a Prosodic feature, URGENT COMMAND, in the derivation of GCs. In order to ensure that GCs are limited to URGENT COMMANDS, I will introduce a feature, [+α], which is carried by the prosody of URGENT COMMANDS.[15] I place this feature high in the left periphery, on a prosodic head.

(56)



[15]Presumably, this prosody is linked with some notion of speaker intent. Formalizing exactly how a prosodic feature is connected to speaker intent is outside the scope of this paper, however.

The intuition behind such a prosodic feature is that the truncation in GCs is broadly associated with conveying urgency on behalf of the speaker. Note that this urgency can have noticeable consequences. We have already seen that imperatives are limited to referring to non-past times. GCs have an additional restriction: they must refer to the immediate future. Reference to the distant future is not allowed.

(57) a. Into the woods right now!
b. Into the woods immediately!
c. #Into the woods next week!

This could not plausibly be some kind of syntactic restriction. Instead I argue that the prosodic feature associated GCs is anchored to the immediate future, because of the nature of urgency. Although URGENT COMMAND prosody is necessary to derive GCs, it is not sufficient. In the next section, I will argue that there is another [+α] feature that accompanies *get-type* verbs. When the feature URGENT COMMAND is combined with get-type verbs, then and only then is the left-edge deletion licensed to form GCs, by checking the [+α] feature.

4.2 Get-type VP

Get-type verbs (e.g., *get, put, keep*) can subcategorize for both an NP theme argument and a location goal argument. In the case of "put," if either the theme or goal argument are absent, the result is ungrammatical.

(58) a. I put the cats in the carrier.
b. *I put the cats.
c. *I put in the carrier.

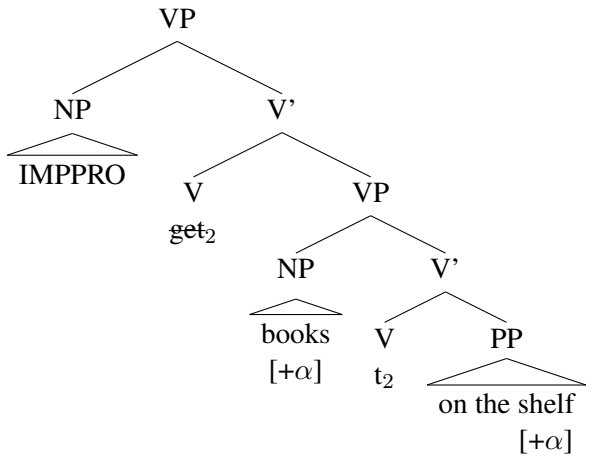
Other get-type verbs, such as "get," can take only a goal, where the subject is interpreted as the theme.

(59) I got into the car.

Get-type verbs can take two complements, a theme and a goal. This forms a perfect analogy with GCs, which can also possess a theme and a goal. I argue that this analogy is not a coincidence, and that the overt material of GCs is in fact the complement of a covert get-type verb. I propose the following structure for the extended VP of a GC, following Larson (1988).[16]

[16]It may also be able to analyze the complement of 'put' as a small clause. See Bruening (2018) for arguments against treating the complement of 'get/put' as a small clause. As far as I can tell, nothing important here hinges on the complement of 'put' being a vP or a small clause, so long as the theme can receive the appropriate feature.

(60)



The structure in (60) places the feature [+α] on the lexical items *books* and *shelf*. The verb *get* assigns the [+α] feature to each lexical head in its complement. If left unchecked, the presence of the [+α] feature does not cause the derivation to crash. If a get-type verb is inserted into the structure, it will only check the feature [+α] if there is a higher [+α] in the structure. This will only happen in the case that the Speech Act Head is filled with the head URGENT COMMAND, which also bears the feature [+α]. Although it may be tempting to posit that there is only one null lexical item, for example *get*, there are GCs that cannot be paraphrased with *get* (e.g., "Jokes to yourself, buddy!")

The [+α] feature is therefore not only carried by the lexical item *get*, but rather several *get-type* verbs that can select for this type of complement. The following verbs can all be deleted in GCs.

(61) a. ~~Put the~~ books on the shelf!
b. ~~Get your~~ hands up!
c. ~~Keep your~~ hands on the table!

What I am positing, therefore, is that themes and goals, in the absence of any overt verb, receive a locative interpretation, such as the one they would get from *get, keep* and *put* when accompanied with COMMAND prosody.

Although limiting this deletion to a specific set of lexical items may be viewed as controversial, it is motivated by the semantic restrictions on the interpretation of GCs. Ultimately, it stands to future research to discover what exactly the relationship between edge deletion and various prosodies and speech acts is. I would only point out that there are a variety of constructions in English that have similar types of edge deletion. For example, so-called 'diary drop' is able to drop 1st person subjects (and sometimes the auxiliary "be") in written English (Haegeman 1990).

(62) a. ~~I~~ went to the store today.
b. ~~I~~ bought eggs.
c. ~~I am~~ going to the pub tonight.

It is also possible to delete both the subject and the auxiliary in informal addressee-oriented questions (Schmerling 1973; Napoli 1982; Weir 2012).

(63) a. ~~Have you~~ ever been to Paris?

b. ~~Are you~~ heading out?

There is also a left-edge ellipsis process that deletes determiners when they are in utterance-initial position, similar to the one in GCs (Napoli 1982).

(64) a. ~~The~~ guy just went nuts!

b. ~~The~~ game was boring.

Weir (2012, 2022) proposes a series of Optimality Theory based analyses of the left-edge ellipsis, in which a series of constraints can be re-ranked to produce several edge ellipsis outputs of these kinds. The important thing for these analyses is that the constraints are flexible, deriving both the pattern in which ellipsis occurs and the one in which it does not occur. This is important because left-edge ellipsis of the kind in (63) and (64) is optional.

GoalC deletion is not optional, however. That is to say, you either get the entire construction, or a GoalC. Intermediate deletion is not acceptable (65b).

(65) a. Get the books off the shelf, now!

b. *The books off the shelf, now!

c. Books off the shelf, now!

I do not know exactly why deletion is obligatory in GCs as opposed to these other types of edge deletion. The type of deletion in GCs is more reminiscent of the MaxElide constraint described in detail by Takahashi & Fox (2005).

(66) MaxElide:
Elide the biggest deletable constituent.

In the original conception, Max-Elide was proposed to account for ellipsis that contains an A-bar trace. Although this process is still generally considered mysterious, we know that the syntax is capable of occasionally forcing the largest possible deletion in certain configurations. This paper, therefore, contributes the fact that GCs are among the constructions which cannot be partially elided.

4.3 Full Derivation

Below is a derivation for *Books on the shelf!* Because there is an [+α] feature on both the speech act URGENT COMMAND and the head noun *books* (assigned by the verb *get*), there is a mandatory deletion between the first [+α] feature to the second [+α] feature. The rest of the structure is a TI clause, with imperative features. UC stands for 'Urgent Command.'

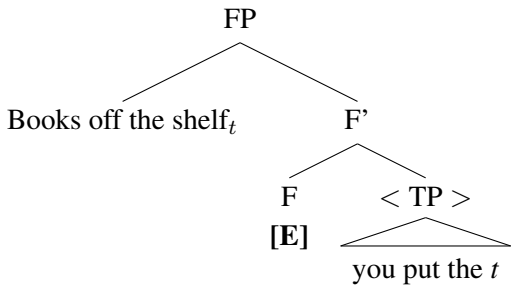
(67) Books on the shelf!

[$_{ProsP}$ UC] [$_{CP}$ OP$_{IMP}$][$_{TP}$ IMPMOD][$_{vP}$ ~~get~~] [$_{vP}$ ~~the~~ books [$_{PP}$ on the shelf]]
[+α] ⟶ [+α]

Any material that is in the path of the deletion in (67) will be removed. This means that the imperative subject, placed in Spec-TP, cannot be pronounced. It also means that negation cannot be pronounced, since the only locations for it would be to the left of the theme. Adverbs and determiners to the left of the theme are also unacceptable. In the event that the prosody is not URGENT COMMAND, the deletion cannot occur, because there is no [+α] feature to effect the deletion.

This type of deletion is obviously unusual and may appear *ad hoc* to the reader. While I am sympathetic to these types of considerations, I would like to point out that more typical accounts of ellipsis cannot handle GCs. A *move-and-elide* approach, such as the type argued for by Merchant (2005), moves the pronounced material out of a deletion site, and then elides what remains. Below is a derivation of how this type of analysis might work for GoalCs, where the TP that is the complement of E is an imperative clause. The E-FEATURE deletes the TP it selects.

(68)



This analysis is successful in explaining what it is designed to explain, which is mainly *VP ellipsis*. It does not explain GCs, however, because the moved material is not a constituent. Whatever analysis we have of the complement of *put* for (68), the determiner *the* would always be part of the same constituent as the theme, and thus would have to move.

In the next section, I will extend this analysis to Japanese and Korean, and show that it works to derive the facts in these languages as well, but on the right edge rather than left edge.

5 Right Edge Deletion in Japanese and Korean

In this section, I will investigate the properties of GCs in Japanese and Korean. As was the case in English, a constant point of comparison will be made between TIs, with verbs that bear imperative morphology, and GCs, which lack verbs. Both Japanese and Korean imperative verbs are marked with a suffix that marks the clause type and overall politeness level. In both (69a) and (69b) below for Japanese, the direct object receives accusative case, and in (69a) the verb is marked with the verbal suffix "-nasai," which both indicates that the utterance is an imperative and that it is relatively polite.[17,18]

[17]Politeness in Japanese is significantly more complicated than is presented here. See McCready (2019) for a more complete overview of the Japanese formality system.

[18]All Japanese judgments come from consultation done with three native speaker linguists. All Korean judgments come from consultation done with three (different) native speaker linguists. Names are redacted for the purpose of anonymous review.

(69) a. Hon-o tana-ni modoshi-nasai!
book-ACC shelf-LOC return-IMP.POLITE
'Put the books onto the shelf!'

b. Hon-o tana-ni!
book-ACC shelf-LOC
'Books on the shelf! (Japanese)

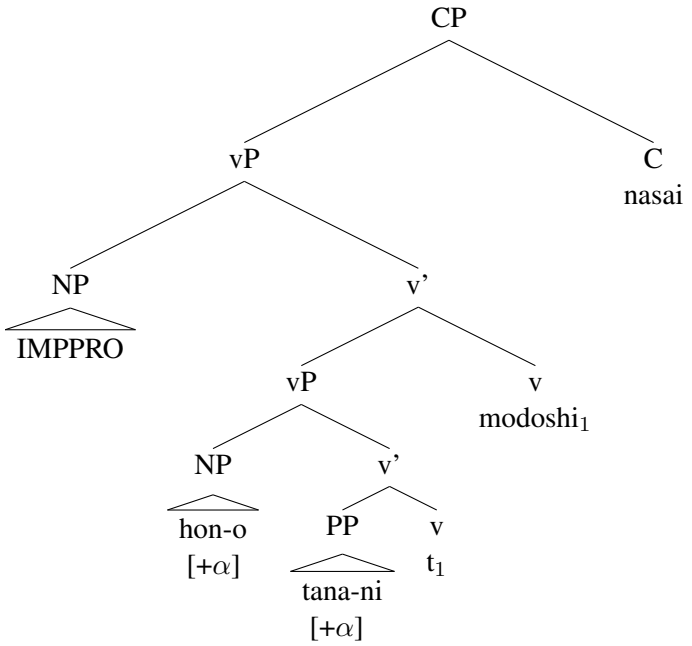
Much like English GCs, the Japanese GC in (69b) constitutes a *performative utterance*. For example, it is incompatible with a past tense modifier, following the NON-PAST CONSTRAINT originally described by Kaufmann (2012).

(70) #Kino hon-o tana-ni!
yesterday book-ACC shelf-LOC
'Books on the shelf yesterday!

(70) fails in Japanese for presumably the same reasons as English. Because it is a performative utterance, it obligates the addressee to do something in the real world. Because the addressee has no control over past events, the sequence is infelicitous.

Assuming that Japanese GCs constitute an identical performative object to English GCs, they are best analyzed as underlyingly imperative clauses. Below, in (71), I give a possible structure for a Japanese TI.

(71)



Because Japanese is head-final, it places C^0 on the right. If we assume that the prosodic feature is tied to the position of C^0, then we might expect deletion to go in the opposite direction in languages with a head-final C^0. It is therefore worth examining the Japanese data to see if there is any evidence of deletion on the right-edge of Japanese GCs. As for subjects and negation, they do not form valid tests. Subjects are typically not pronounceable in Japanese TIs, except in a specific configuration which will be discussed later in this section.

(72) *Anta kono-hon-o tana-ni modoshi-nasai!
you.informal this-book-acc shelf-loc return-imp.polite
Intended: 'Hey you put the books on the shelf!' (no prosodic break)

It is quite common for languages to not permit overt imperative subjects (Aikhenvald 2010). As such, its absence does not tell us anything about deletion in GCs. Negation runs into a different issue; it is a verbal suffix. As such, it is obligatorily deleted in GCs, because the verb is elided.

(73) Hon-o tana-ni modosu-na!
book-acc shelf-loc put-neg
'Don't put the books on the shelf!'

Because negation is a verbal suffix, by definition it cannot appear in a GC, which must be verbless. Indeed, attempts to remove the verb and keep the suffix are judged comically ungrammatical by my Japanese informants.

(74) *Hon-o tana-ni-na!
book-acc shelf-loc-neg
(intended) 'Don't books on the shelf!'

This leaves adverbs as a possible diagnostic. Fortunately, adverb position strongly suggests that there is deletion on the right edge. Much like English, adverb position is flexible in Japanese TIs. There is a position available between the goal and the verb in TIs for adverbs.

(75) Kono-hono-o tana-ni **hayaku** modoshi-nasai!
this-book-acc shelf-loc quickly return-imp.polite
'Put those books onto the shelf!'

If Japanese GCs merely elide the verb, then we would expect the adverb to be able to appear to the right of the goal in a Japanese GC. This position is in fact ungrammatical without a prosodic break (76).

(76) *Hon-o tana-ni hayaku!
quickly book-acc shelf-loc
'Books on the shelf quickly!'

The Japanese pattern therefore mirrors the English one. A position on the right edge that is available in TIs is unavailable in GCs. Adapting the English analysis to the Japanese facts yields the correct results, assuming that the prosodic deletion feature proceeds leftward rather than rightward.

One prediction that this analysis makes is that elements that were unacceptable in English, because they are placed on the left-edge, should be acceptable in Japanese if they are not in the path of deletion. This prediction is borne out with both determiners and contrastive overt subjects.

Determiners are acceptable in Japanese GCs. There is essentially no restriction in what types of modifiers can appear with the GC theme in Japanese.

(77) a. *Kono*-hon-o tana-ni!
those-book-ACC shelf-LOC
'*Those* books on the shelf!'

b. *Anata*-no hon-o tana-ni!
your-of book-ACC shelf-LOC
'*Your* books on the shelf!'

Recall that each of these modifiers was ungrammatical in English. The current analysis predicts this asymmetry between Japanese and English. Because Japanese deletes on the right edge, determiners are not in the path of deletion. Therefore, there are no restrictions on which determiners are possible in Japanese GCs.

Overt subjects are generally ungrammatical in Japanese GCs, as was already shown in (72). However, there is one context where pronouncing the subject overtly is marginal. In a scenario where the speaker is commanding multiple people to do multiple things, the subject can be overtly pronounced with topic marking to contrast each individual with the other. This scenario is compatible with GCs, with the subject being overtly pronounced to the left of the theme.

(78) anata_wa$_1$ hon-o tana-ni, anata-wa$_2$ pen-o hako-ni!
you.formal-TOP book-ACC shelf-LOC you.formal-TOP pen-ACC box-LOC
'You$_1$ books on the shelf, you$_2$ pens in the box!'

In the same context in English, pronouncing the overt subject is ungrammatical with no prosodic break.

(79) *You$_1$ books on the shelf, you$_2$ pens in the box!

The possibility of an overt subject in Japanese GCs is predicted by the analysis presented in this paper. Because Japanese subjects appear on the left, and the deletion occurs on the right, we would expect subjects to be pronounceable. Because English subjects appear on the left, and the deletion occurs on the left, the subject is never pronounceable. Indeed, overt subjects are grammatical in exactly the same context that they are grammatical in TIs, exactly as predicted by this analysis. This provides strong evidence in favor of a linear deletion, rather than a constituency-based account. The sequences of heads that are deleted in Japanese cannot be plausibly argued to be a constituent.

As for Korean, it patterns similarly to Japanese. GCs can be formed by omitting the verbal complex.

(80) a. Meli-ey son noh-a-yo!
head-Loc hand put-Imp-Pol
'Put your hands on your head!'

b. Meli-ey son!
head-Loc hand
'Hands on your head!'

There is an additional interesting data point from Korean, however. Korean word order is generally quite free, with the one strict requirement being that the verb strongly prefers to come at the end of the clause (Sohn 2001). Thus, for the TI in (80a), both theme-goal and goal-theme orders are grammatical for the complements of the verb. Accusative case is optional on the theme in both configurations in TIs.

(81) a. Meli-ey son-(ul) noh-a-yo!
head-Loc hand-Acc put-Imp-Pol
'Put your hands on your head!'

b. Son-(ul) meli-ey noh-a-yo!
hand-Acc head-Loc put-Imp-Pol
'Put the books on the shelf!'

An interesting thing happens with accusative case in GCs, however. When the theme is on the right edge, accusative case must be omitted on the theme in GCs. When placed on the left edge, it is optional, like in the TI.

(82) a. Son-(ul) meli-ey!
hand-Acc head-Loc
'Hands on your head!'

b. Meli-ey son-(*ul)!
head-Loc hand-Acc
Intended: 'Hands on your head!'

This pattern is reminiscent of the pattern of Korean case deletion in fragment answers, described in detail by An (2016, 2019). Case markers in Korean fragment answers are capable of being deleted, but only when they are on the right edge.

(83) a. Nwu-ka John-ul manna-ss-ni?
who-Nom John-Acc meet-Pst-Q
'Who met John?

b. Cho-(ka).
Cho-Nom
'Cho (met John).'

(84) a. Nwu-ka nwukwu-lul manna-ss-ni?
who-Nom who-Acc meet-Pst-Q
'Who met whom?'

b. Cho-*(ka) John-(ul).
Cho-Nom John-Acc
'Cho (met) John.'

An argues that case markers may only be omitted in Korean if they are adjacent to a deletion site. The patterns described by An, however, all detailed optional deletion of case markers in fragment answers. Fragment commands, on the other hand, exemplify an instance of obligatory deletion in English, Japanese, and Korean. This matches the pattern seen in English: Edge

deletion was optional in all configurations except GCs, where it was mandatory. Although there is currently no obvious explanation for why fragment commands require deletion, there is a cross-linguistic robustness supporting the English analysis.

6 Conclusion

This paper has shown that there exists a construction, *Goal Commands*, which has the properties of traditional imperative clauses. There is an edge deletion process which deletes material to the left in English, and to the right in Japanese and Korean. This edge deletion appears to take place in the presence of the speech act URGENT COMMAND feature, and a *get*-type verb. This paper provides a novel edge deletion analysis which derives the facts that subjects, negation, adverbs and determiners are all ungrammatical in GCs in English, because they all surface to the left of the GC theme. In contrast, Japanese adverbs and determiners can surface to the left of the GC theme, because Japanese deletes on the right edge. Korean obligatorily deletes its case markers because they are in the path of deletion, on the right.

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