

# Critical Discourse Analysis of Stereotypes in American and British Stand-up Comedy

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## ABSTRACT

It is feasible to characterize the facts based on experience, i.e. the speech act since language is just a social phenomenon. It is via written texts that linguistic phenomena like language may be analyzed, categorized, and recorded. People frequently misunderstand the meaning of the words and expressions they use wrong. The study's presumption is to examine the critical discourse analysis (CDA) of stereotypes in American and British stand-up comedians' performances, with the objective of identifying the most common types of words and sentences used, as well as determining the frequency classes of words. The work is important as it presents a collection of language data from a specific time, enabling analysis of the lexico-grammatical properties of stand-up comedy and the dynamics of language change processes. For qualitative research, the information gathered from YouTube videos with players enables verbatim recording of the comedians' performances. The literature of the genre of stand-up comedy is mostly unexplored, because the genre is extremely young and has only gained popularity in recent years. As the acts of speech include certain components that are defined by a certain frequency and, consequently, probability, they may naturally be evaluated and investigated utilizing computer-assisted methodologies and quantitative approaches.

**Keywords:** *American and British stand-up comedy; text; stereotypes; critical discourse analysis (CDA)*

## INTRODUCTION

Comedy, which is a fundamental component of national culture, is the ideal medium through which to convey the sociocultural and cultural differences that exist among different peoples. The sense of humor of a nation may be seen as a mirror that reflects the distinct qualities and identity of that nation. Humor, which is often considered to be the most important aspect of national culture, serves as an expression of the cultural, social, and national characteristics of many nations [1]. As humor spreads more quickly than most other types of colloquial speech, it is via comedy that linguistic changes become apparent. Despite the fact that comedy is an essential component of all languages and cultures, there has not been enough research done on the comic genre, particularly in terms of comparison [2].

Because of the transnational nature of American and British comedy, films, and other productions in the media industry, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of both American and British comedy, focusing specifically on the modern trend of the "stand-up" genre. This will allow for a better understanding of the necessity of such an analysis. Humor is regarded in linguistics as a sophisticated psychological, social, ethnic, and historical phenomenon, the core of which may be observed in actual speech interaction. In this context, the study of humor by fields like psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, and other studies has significantly advanced the idea of the humorous as a linguistic phenomenon [3]. The goal of the present study is to identify parallels and contrasts between stand-up comedy in American and British cultures by analyzing the comedians' joke-delivery technique.

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The purpose of this study is to determine the ways in which stand-up comedy from the American and British expresses itself based on CDA as well as its qualities. Under this framework, the study investigates the phenomenon of stand-up comedy, as well as its linguistic qualities and the social and linguistic functions it performs. The study sheds illumination on the comic's role in facilitating interactions between people of different cultures and pushes forward the concept of humor as a diverse "social, linguistic, ethnic, and cultural phenomena" [4].

The study's conclusions may be used to minimize communication breakdowns brought on by misunderstanding the linguistic specificity of humor as well as for a more thorough and thorough comprehension of humorous texts and vocal comedy. Stand-up comedy is an example of spontaneous humor, which is a prepared and repeated speech that primarily consists of jokes that have been written in advance [5]. Even though there is a current movement toward the utilization of semantic cohesiveness, thematically linked jokes, jokes that are related to the biography of the narrator, or jokes that are related to the setting of the performance, stand-up comedy may be presented to the audience as a selection of incoherent jokes.

A range of linguistic tools that are specific to humorous texts is used by stand-up comedians. Another point to remember is, those stand-up comedian writings have a definite structure, particularly in the opening and conclusion, which often do not include any jokes. The narrator should hook the audience with the speech's common narrative before delivering the first joke. It may be likened to a telephone call in which the same trait can be linked to the absence of linkage between the majority of the text and its beginning and ending sections. Discourse analysis is responsible for some of the most well liked research techniques in the humanities and social sciences during the last decade [6].

Although there are many publications on the theory of discourse and the idea of discourse analysis, it may be challenging to locate practical study findings that provide a thorough explanation of the technique. The best method for studying verbal interaction at any level is thus difficult to ascertain. To identify who controls topics and modifies them (semantic macrostructure), as well as who decides on the form and manner of speech, critical discourse analysis is used. All that is mentioned in this discourse pertains to the topic at hand, although not all of the theme components are present at any given time [7]. This study makes an effort to evaluate the stand-up comedian's critical discourse. It will also be utilized to do more comparative studies of contemporary British and American comedians.

### **Stereotypes**

Historically, stand-up comedy has used ethnic humor, and ethnic stereotypes are often exploited in contemporary stand-up comedy. Ethnic comedy is often utilized to lessen the negative effects of certain stereotypes that are deemed unfavorable. Ethnic groupings and stereotypes are strongly intertwined. According to some academics, stereotypes are ideas about the traits, qualities, and conduct of people who belong to a certain group. Stereotypes can develop because of contextual variables such contrasting societal positions, interpersonal conflicts, and power imbalances. Sometimes, however, stereotypes develop as a defense of the existing quo or in reaction to a need for social identification [8].

They, thus, evolve in different circumstances to fulfill specific duties required by those environments. Stereotypes serve to clarify how to connect with others for individuals. A study [9] asserts that while making comedy with individuals from different origins, employing a disparaging stereotype about a person's race might be seen as a source of pride. A study [10] agrees that ethnic comedy is a method to embrace one's group identity. To lessen any unfavorable effects of stereotypes, stand-up comedians utilize them and ethnic comedy. One of the key characteristics of stereotypes, according to a study [11], is to make it easier to comprehend other individuals by providing information about them based on group membership. There are three principles to comprehend the nature of stereotypes:

- Stereotypes may be useful when trying to comprehend or make sense of a situation.
- Stereotypes serve as energy-saving devices that make it easier for listeners to understand.
- Stereotypes are commonplace ideas held by a group of individuals. They should be created in accordance with accepted standards and perceptions of these groups and their traits.

The purpose of this study [12] is to examine the comedians in Nigerian stand-up comedy who use comedy to develop concepts of national identity. Videos of Nigerian stand-up comedians were sampled purposefully, and critical discourse analysis was used to understand the data.

Using Discourse Type theory to analyze comedic performances is the main goal of this article [13]. This is accomplished by proposing that stand-up joke tales have two contexts: the context of the joke itself and the context of the storyteller telling the joke. The research uses the performances of male and female Nigerian stand-up comedians to make judgments. The results of the research show that stand-up comedians engage in discourse types, which are particular forms of communication within the framework of a joke.

To lessen backlash, Malaysian stand-up comedies of various ethnic and political backgrounds adopt politeness techniques in their text structures, which are investigated and compared in this article [14]. To do this, a mixed method approach was used, where the structural characteristics were tabulated in order to identify the predominant structural patterns of the stand-up comedy. Also, a content analysis was done to look at the many politeness techniques used in both kinds of stand-up comedians.

### **Problem Statement**

Ordinary speech frequently contains a variety of humorous characteristics. In truth, humorous words, teasing, ridiculing, sarcasm, interjections, and other techniques bring some flavor to speech and interaction. People frequently misunderstand the significance of the terms and phrases they employ. Nonetheless, conversation analysis and comprehending the overt and hidden connotations of utterances are of great interest to linguists. There is a sizable audience for comedies all across the world. Comedies depict real-world settings, casual conversation, and organic interactions among a variety of individuals. Comedies include humor, comedic language, interjections, speech actions, ridicule, sarcasm, and teasing, much like all other speech aspects. Things come naturally to people. Comedies are the best source for finding them for study.

Examples of comedy and humor are demonstrated by a few shows chosen by the researcher. An effort has been made by the researcher to highlight the kinds and applications of humor-creating techniques based on the study of these cases. The study provides linguists and academics with a detailed analysis and understanding of comedy and humorous elements in natural speech. For laypeople, it raises knowledge of the positive and negative effects of ridicule, teasing, etc. so that, people will use caution while employing them.

The purpose is to instill in participants a sense of caution when using language and recognition that words have the power to strengthen or damage interpersonal bonds. Between pleasant, teasing, and caustic comments, there are imperfections. For some people, mockery may be funny, but it may be painful for the target. People will undoubtedly be able to use words wisely if they are aware of these concepts, comprehend them, and the speech in which they are represented. As a result, comedy from both American and British stand-up comedians was chosen by the researcher. Despite the fact that the two countries languages are similar, the two distinct choices allow for a comparison of comedy in the two nations.

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) of stereotypes in the stand-up comedy performances of American and British comedians will be examined in this study, with a focus on identifying the most typical word and sentence forms, as well as determining the frequency classes of terms.

The further part of the portion includes such as part 2 representing the methods, part 3 representing the experimental result and discussion, and part 4 denotes the concluded part.

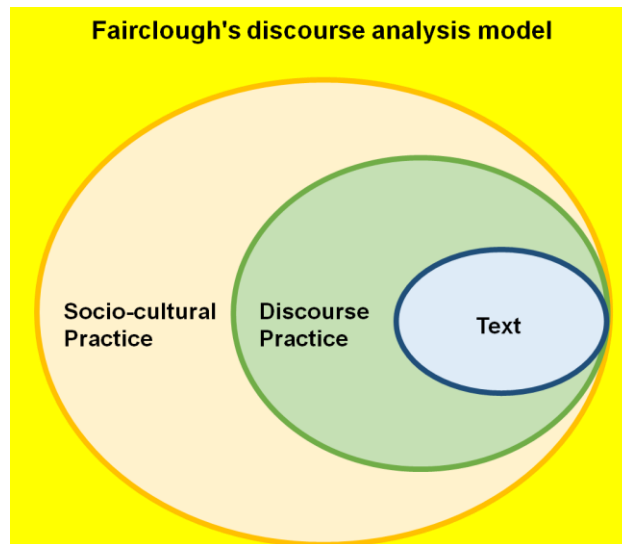
### **METHODS**

By spotting recurrent, dominating speech patterns in this stand-up comedy analysis is carried out. Standard, consistent in certain contexts and situational communication techniques are present in the stand-up comedy under study. This study, which examines ethnic stereotypes as they are presented in stand-up comedians, is qualitative. The research used the computer-based text analysis program "NVivo" to analyze the speech of American and British stand-up comedians.

Most of the time, stand-up comedians in the United States and the United Kingdom communicate in relatively brief comedy, which often just includes a couple of words or lines. One of the entertainment program categories is stand-up comedy, which is a solo comedy act performed for a live audience. These shows include on-stage speakers who interact with the audience on current events, crack-wise, and sometimes make fun of the crowd. The routines, one-liners, and audience improvisation that stand-up comedians typically perform are part of their repertory.

### Critical discourse analysis (CDA) using Fairclough's discourse analysis model

The CDA is also a fantastic tool to utilize in advertising since the language used in commercials needs to be attractive in order to persuade the audience to use the things being advertised when the ads are being seen. To understand a text, voice, or visual image's meaning and decode social and ideological frameworks, critical discourse analysis is the study of it. A text is being explained using CDA in an effort to achieve a certain goal. Discourse is viewed as a social practice by CDA. Instead of using speech as an individual activity or to reflect anything, Fairclough utilizes it as a collective practice. Text, discourse practice, and socio-cultural practice are Fairclough's three categories for dividing discourse analysis. Figure 1 illustrates Fairclough's paradigm of discourse analysis.



**Figure 1: Fairclough's discourse analysis model**

Text implies that the text's characteristics are examined. Semantics, sentence structure, lexicon, coherence, and cohesion are all linguistic concepts that are related to text analysis. Every writing has three purposes: representation, connection, and identity, according to Fairclough. Cohesion and coherence, syntax, and diction are a few aspects and types of text that may be examined in order to disclose meaning through the textual dimension. This analysis is used to show how sentences are constructed to generate bigger units in cohesion and coherence. The usage of vocabulary, repeats, synonyms, antonyms, pronouns, conjunctions, and other words can be used to identify the relationship in this study. However, critical discourse analysis greatly benefits from grammar analysis. The grammar analysis placed more emphasis on the clause's position inside the conversation. The sentences were examined from the perspectives of transitivity, topic, and modality. The keywords employed in the text are examined in the diction. Metaphors can also be found in the text. Vocabulary is crucial because it relates to the issue of how reality is represented in language and how language creates a certain reality.

A component of the creation and consumption of texts is discourse practice. An examination of the individuals responsible for writing the text is done. The parties who are the intended receivers or text message users have been examined. An examination based on presumptions about the social background outside of the media that affects the creation of discourse in the media is known as socio-cultural practice. According to Fairclough, discourse practice is required to establish a connection between a text and a sociocultural practice. In addition, Fairclough categorizes sociocultural practice into situational, institutional, and social categories. In most cases, the context of the event when

the news was released is more important than the specific circumstances in which each paragraph was created. The institutional level examines how organizational institutions affected practice at the time that discourses was being produced. Social has a significant impact on the speech that emerges on a social level. Changes in society influence the speech that appears in the media.

## RESULT

For our study, YouTube videos recorded using Real Player were selected by us to enable verbatim recording of the comedians' performances for qualitative analysis. The top decile, which comprises 1375 symbols, of stand-up routines by “American (Louis C.K., George Carlin) and British (Ricky Gervais, Eddie Izzard, Jimmy Carr)” performers were selected for the study. 35 nouns, 64 verbs, 19 adjectives, 23 adverbs, 56 pronouns, 14 articles, 18 prepositions, 19 conjunctions, and 3 numerals comprise the text's structure. Five of the text's most common terms have been selected. These comedians were selected due to their prominence and unique design style for their gags. The audience's responses revealed that their humor was met with hearty laughter, demonstrating the extent of the audience's attractiveness. Table 1 and figure 2 depict the outcome of discourse word frequency query by using Nvivo.

**Table 1: Result of Discourse Word Frequency Query by using Nvivo**

Word	Count	Length	percentage
girlfriend	5	10	3,15
get	2	3	2,45
cosmo	1	6	2,55
lunch	1	5	1,55
like	4	4	1,55

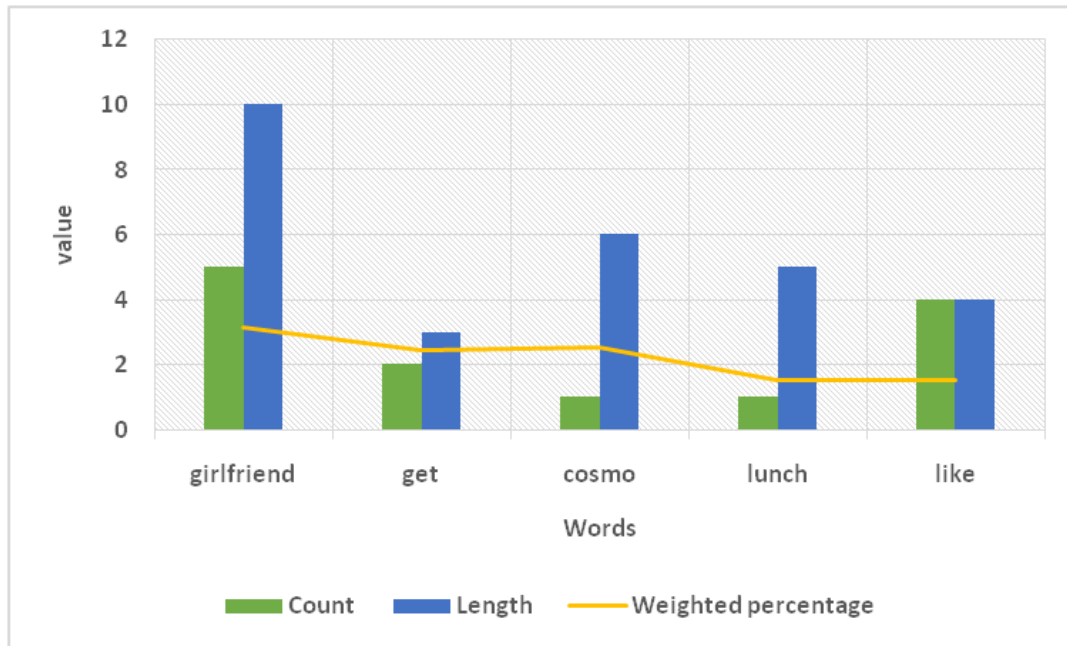


Figure 2: Result of Discourse Word Frequency Query by using Nvivo

From figure 2 and table 1, it shows the word count, length, and weighted percentage of the selected text for analysis.

From Table 1, it can be observed that the three most prevalent terms are 'like,' 'girlfriend,' and 'get'.

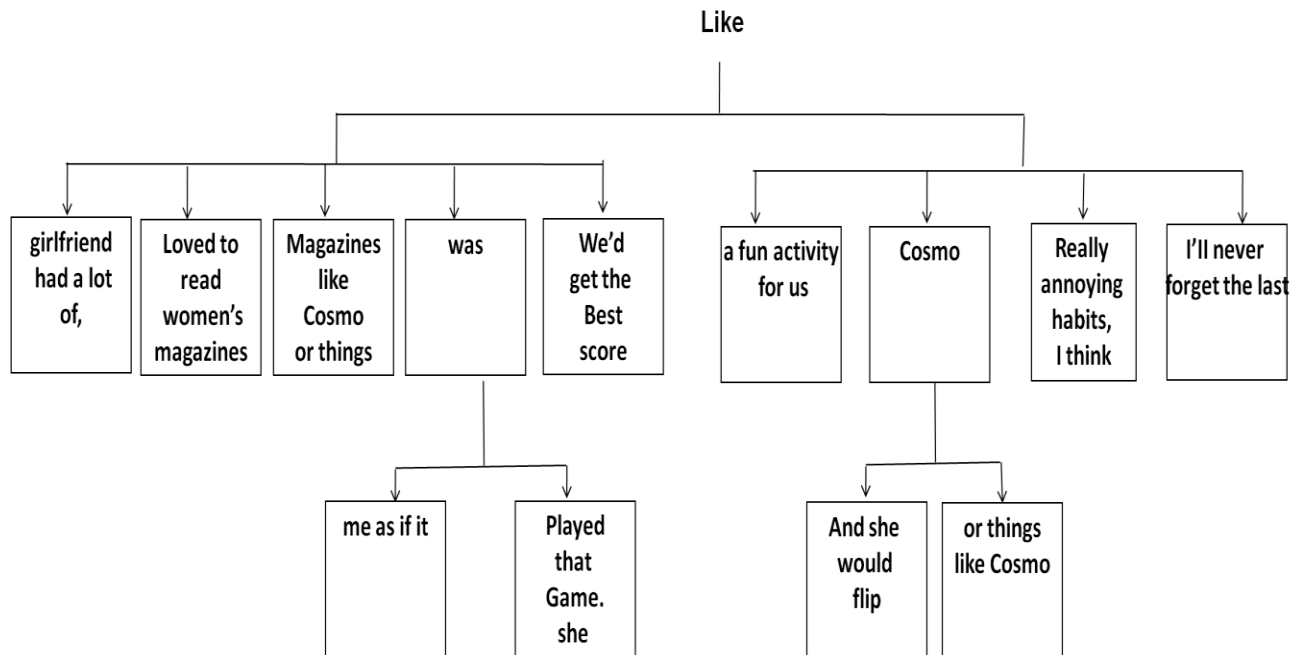


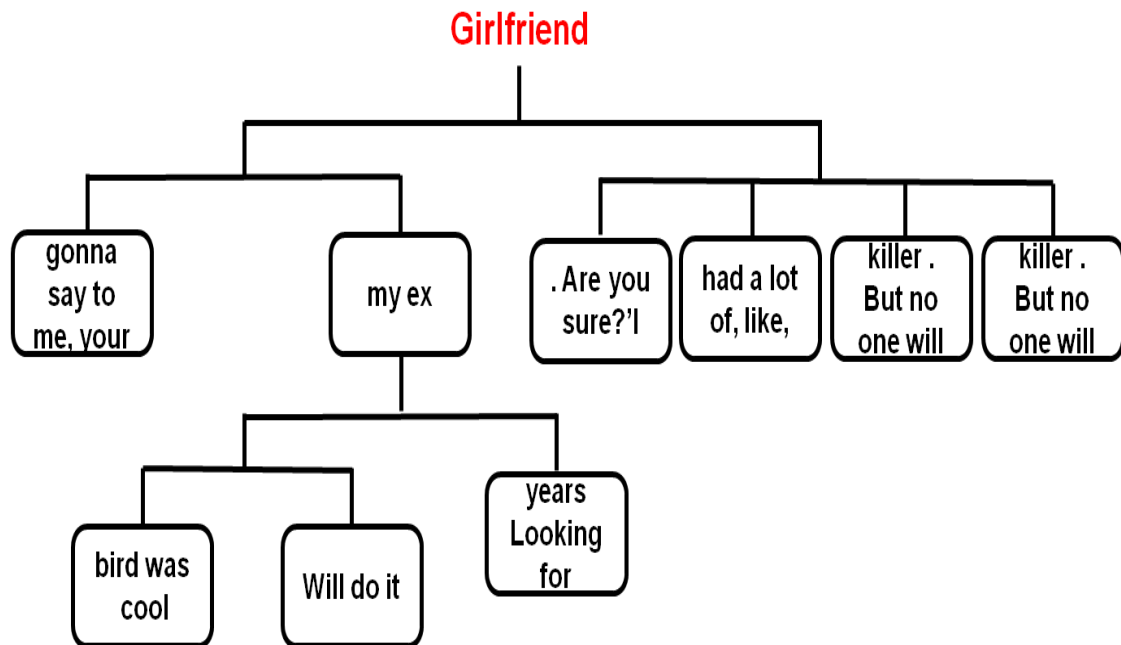
Figure 3: Result of Textual Search (like)

Four times, the word "like" appears. The meaning of the word "like" is immediately apparent from the query phrase used in the text search.

- *My ex – girlfriend had a lot of like really annoying habits* - The term "like" describes a noun's typical behavior.
- *... she loved to read women's magazines like Cosmo or things like Cosmo* - The term "like" functions as an adverb here, defining "Cosmo."
- *... as if it was like a fun activity for us to do together ...*- The usage of 'like' as a preposition is evident here.
- *She was like if you could have lunch with anyone in the world ....*- The word "like" is a conjunction that links the two sentences together.

Figure 4 shows a text search query including the term "girlfriend," and the associated results.

- *... looking for my ex – girlfriend's killer.*
- *My ex – girlfriend owned a parakeet*
- *My ex – girlfriend had a lot of ...*
- *That's what you're gonna say to me, your girlfriend ...*



**Figure 4: Result of textual Search (girlfriend)**

It is apparent from these instances that the word obtains may be employed in a variety of tenses.

- *"But even worse is she would get mad at my answers".*
- *" ... so we'd get the best score ..."*



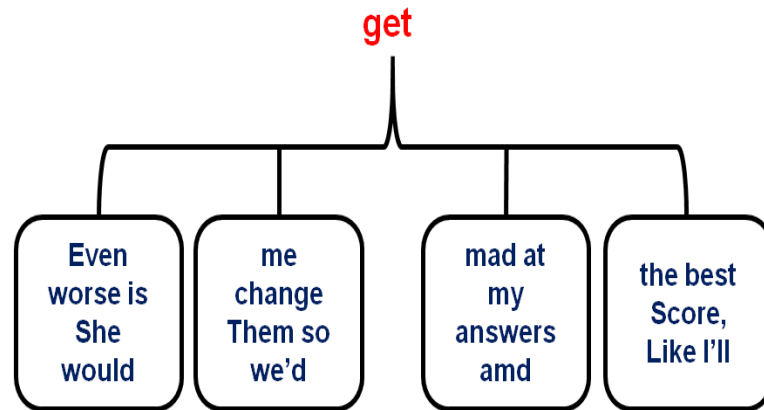


Figure 5: Result of Textual Search (get)

### Discussion

The performance discourse of a well-known American and British stand-up comedian was examined using the computer application Nvivo in this study. Upon examining the critical discourses, it was found that the comic generally employed verbs (64), with 'get' and 'change' being the most common ones, as shown in Table 1. Some often-used nouns (35) include girlfriend, boyfriend, and lunch. Also, the proper noun Cosmo is employed.

### CONCLUSION

The critical discourse of American and British stand-up comedians was examined for our research. The conversation transcript, which was examined using the text analysis tool Nvivo, demonstrated the high narrativity level of the critical discourse under investigation. The comic used the following terms the most frequently: *like, girlfriend, get, Cosmo, and lunch*. The first two of these five words were separated, and their context was examined. Furthermore, the portion of the speech to which the three most commonly used words belong was also identified. This current pilot study aims to get a comprehensive understanding of the language used in comedic speech as well as to conduct additional comparative research with the vocabulary used by contemporary other nation comedians.

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