

The Relationship between the Students' English Speaking Skills and Their Closeness to English

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Abstract

Speaking English skills is a frightening thing for some English for Foreign Language Learners (EFL), including students at one of the universities in Jakarta. Even though they live and stay in Jakarta and its surroundings, which is the capital city of Indonesia with high job competition, there are still many students who have a low level of English speaking skills. This study aims to determine the relationship between English speaking skills and their closeness to English as seen from the 5 levels of students' proficiency in speaking English. This research uses the descriptive qualitative method. The subjects of this study were 2 classes with a total of 60 students at a university in Jakarta in the 2019-2020 school year. Researchers used tests, questionnaires, interviews, and literature studies as data collection techniques. While the data analysis technique used by researchers is using data triangulation. The results of this study indicate that the closer they are to English in their daily lives, both by frequently reading English articles, frequently watching English films, often listening to English music, the better the students' level of English speaking skills.

Keywords: *speaking, EFL, closeness to English, speaking proficiency, English speaking skills*

INTRODUCTION

Jakarta, as the capital city of Indonesia, demands a global life or can synergize with real-time world communication. Many companies really need people who can communicate in international languages for ease of daily interaction with other countries. Many families in Indonesia, especially in Jakarta, teach their children as early as possible to learn English in order to have skills that can make it easier for their children to compete in the world of school, campus, and career. As quoted by Kompas.com (2012), Wall Street workers say "English language skills are important for a person's competitiveness, with good English skills and good competitiveness, it will benefit to the country."

Meanwhile, speaking English is considered as a scary thing for some learners of English as a second language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Speaking itself according to Kosar and Bedir (2014), is an interactive process in the activity of constructing meaning which consists of produce and receive information. Unlike listening, reading, and writing which can be done

individually, speaking English is generally done by two or more people in communicating. This is what makes an EFL student afraid to speak English. They feel afraid to make mistakes and moreover that mistakes are seen by others, because they will feel ashamed of the other person they are talking to. This fear affects their level of fluency in speaking, besides they have to overcome this fear, they also have to think about what words to say. This also makes them often forget what to say.

Crystal (2003) said that speaking English is considered the most important skill to master because English is in a strong position as an international language in communication. This was added by several researchers who said that speaking English was the most stressful skill among the 4 other skills, namely listening, reading, and writing (Young, 1992; Hauck & Hurd, 2005; Liu, 2009). Zhengdong (2013), states compared to reading, writing, and listening, there is a lack of data that can document students' experiences of speaking English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) in various learning contexts despite the fact that the ability to

speaking a second language or a foreign language is widely considered to be something that is daunting to most language learners.

Meantime, Jakarta, with its various demands to be able to master the English language, still does not make students at one of the universities in Jakarta able to master English speaking skills. Based on observations made at one of university in Jakarta in 2 classes of English for Specific Purposes (ESP, the students' level of proficiency in speaking English varied, some were good, some were bad. This can be seen when researchers make observations at the university, the ESP lecturer there invites students to speak English for 2-3 minutes and the results of their speaking skills seem varied.

The researcher saw the diversity phenomenon at the time of the observation, therefore the researcher wanted to know whether the various results had something to do with their closeness to English. This closeness could be in terms of their liking for English books or articles, their hobby in listening to English songs, or their fondness for ESP lessons which could be interesting or even other things such as their joy for the ESP lecturers who taught them at that time.

According to Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011) in their journals published in the British Journal of Arts and Social Science, speaking stages are divided into 5 stages, those are Pre-production, Early Production, Speech Emergence, Intermediate Fluency, and Advanced Fluency. In the pre-production stage, students listen much more than they speak. The second stage is initial production. At this stage the student has said a few words and several phrases that have been memorized even though with a few mistakes. The third stage is called the Appearance of Speech. At this stage students already have a good vocabulary, they can also ask with simple question sentences. The fourth stage is the Intermediate Smoothness stage. At this stage students are able to say more complex sentences. Apart from that in speaking a foreign language, there are several factors that affect the fluency in its implementation. These factors are summarized by Muamar (2019), namely internal

factors which include motivation, interest, and self-confidence. There are also external factors, namely first language and environment.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative research method. The stages of the research carried out by the researcher were: preliminary observation of the research subject and place of research, giving English speaking skills tests, giving questionnaires to research subjects in the form of google form in order to improve environmental friendliness, interviewing research subjects, and the final stage is the analysis of the results of the test, questionnaires, interviews and literature study or data triangulation. The subjects in this study were 60 students from one of university in Jakarta in the business administration study program who studied the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course in the 2019-2020 school year. The age range of these subjects varied between 18-20 years. This research is limited to potential industry players who really need a high level of communication in English. The data collection technique used by the researchers was to use the English speaking test to find out which stage the student's English speaking skills were at, a questionnaire to see how close the student was to English, interviews to minimize misinterpretation and to see how close the student was to English, and the last data collection technique is a literature study to see theoretical studies regarding the acquisition of a second or foreign language. While the data analysis technique which is done by researchers is to use data triangulation from the data that has been collected.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research departs from the high need for English in the industrialized world and as the mandate of the minister of education, culture and higher education on "Merdeka Learning Kampus Merdeka" in order to adapt education to the needs

of the industry to be targeted. As an English lecturer from one of the state polytechnics in Jakarta whose graduates will enter the industrial world, and as a lecturer who teaches English for Specific Purposes, researchers are very concerned about the extent to which students' abilities regarding English, a language that is very much needed for the industrial world. When the researcher was at one of university in Jakarta, it turned out that the English speaking skills of students, in this case the subject were in a business study program, were very varied but tended to be lower. However, Darmadi (2015) defines speaking as a productive skill that can be observed directly and empirically. These observations colored by the accuracy and effectiveness of the listening maker's ability, which of course interferes with the reliability and validity of oral production tests. One that should be emphasized that subjects of this research live in the city of Jakarta which is actually the center of industry and offices and with better facilities such as internet coverage, the environment, etc. For this reason, researchers want to know, even though they live in the capital, whether they remain close to English or not and what is the condition of their English speaking skills.

The value of the test results is known that the range given is 1-100 with the following conditions: 1-20 is Pre-production, 21-40 is Early Production, 41-60 is in the Speech Emergence category, 61-80 Intermediate Fluency, and a value 81-100 is in the Advanced Fluency category. Description of the rubric is needed to determine the value in order to be more objective in grading. The description of the rubric is based on the

Table 1
The Position of the Student Level in Speaking English

No	Level	Students
1	<i>Pre-production</i>	8
2	<i>Early Production</i>	28
3	<i>Speech Emergence</i>	21
4	<i>Intermediete Fluency</i>	3
5	<i>Advanced Fluency</i>	-

From the table above, it can be seen that there are 8 students in the Pre-production stage

and 28 students in the Early Production stage. Whereas at the Speech Emergence stage there were explanation by Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011) in their journals. The description is that in the pre-production stage, students listen much more than they speak, and their speaking level is still very weak or very little. At this stage, students are still very difficult to listen to their interlocutors. When students want to answer or speak in English, students still use their memorized phrases. The second stage is initial production. At this stage the student has said a few words and several phrases that have been memorized even though with a few mistakes. Students' speaking skills at this stage are better than the first stage. At this stage students are more comprehensive in listening to their interlocutors.

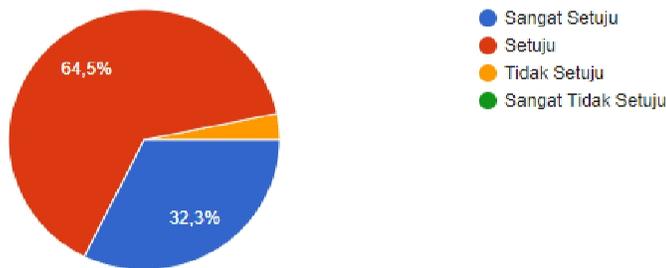
The third stage is called the Appearance of Speech. At this stage students already have a good vocabulary, they can also ask with simple question sentences. At this stage, students are able to understand some new information but still find it a little difficult with some context meanings. Sometimes students at this stage have difficulty understanding meaning because they lack background information about the culture of the foreigner. The fourth stage is the Intermediate Smoothness stage. At this stage students are able to say more complex sentences. They can also ask clearly what they want to ask in a detailed sentence. At this stage students are able to joke using their foreign language, they have a better understanding of the abstract and hypothetical discussion. The final stage is the advanced Fluency stage. At this stage students can speak their vocabulary without preparation. From the rubric, it can be concluded that the student test scores are as shown in the table below.

21 students and finally there were 3 students at the Intermediate Fluency stage. For the Advanced Fluency stage, none of the students had reached this stage. From this it can be concluded that the percentage of students' proficiency in English speaking skills, if numbers 1 and 2 are combined and considered the low category, it will be 60% of the total students in the low category. If number 3 is considered to be in the sufficient category, then 35% of students are in the sufficient category.

Finally, if numbers 4 and 5 are combined and considered in the high category, then only 5% of students have high English speaking skills. The results of this test can later help determine whether students with high speaking skill categories are close to English or whether students with low categories are far from English.

After finding the student category, the researcher distributed a questionnaire, the results of the questionnaire were as follows.

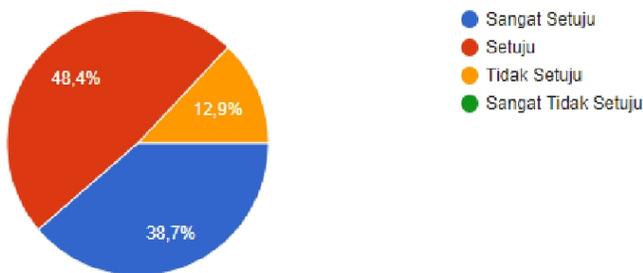
Figure 1
Percentage Diagram of Students' Preferences for English



From the diagram above, it is known that 64.5% of students agree that they like English, and 32.3% of students say they strongly agree they like English. Meanwhile, 3.2% of students stated that they disagreed if they said they liked English and no student chose to strongly disagree on this questionnaire. From the diagram, it can be

concluded that 96.8% of students like English and the rest don't like English. If you match the test results from here, it can be seen that even though they like English, they may not be proficient in English speaking skills. So loving English do not always make students have a high level of proficiency in speaking English.

Figure 2
Percentage of Student Enjoyment on Matters Related to English

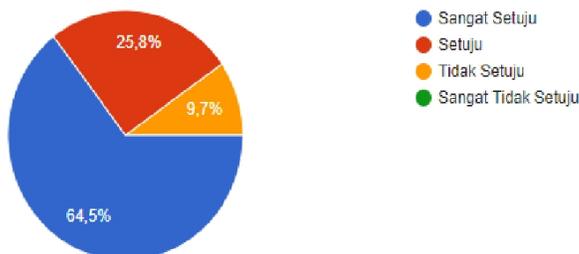


In the figure above, 38.7% of students said that they strongly agree that they are happy with things related to English including English films, English games, English songs, English news articles, speaking in English, and listening something in English. There are 48.4% of students stated that they agree with this statement. The rest chose to disagree with the statement as much as 12.9% and no one strongly disagreed with the statement. From this it can be concluded that there is a total of 87.1% of students like things related to English. Al-Eiadeh (2016) had interviews and find

the results on it that Listening to English native speakers in a different ways such as in film or song is very essential for persons to strengthen correct pronunciation of words. He states 10 out of 20 participants (27.77%) mentioned that they have solutions through listening to English, songs, news, films and, conversations. However, although the enthusiasm for matters related to English is very high, this does not make the student have very good English speaking skills. So if someone only has fun in English, it is not necessarily able to improve one's speaking skills in English.

Figure 3

Student Agreement Regarding Vocabulary Increase through English Songs, Films, Games, and Articles

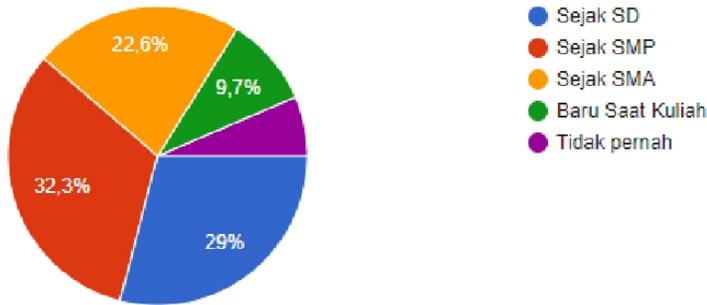


In the figure above, it can be seen that 64.5% of students strongly agree that their vocabulary increases when they listen to English songs, watch English films, play English games and read English articles. Of all, 25.8% of students considered that they agreed to this. The remaining 9.7% answered that they did not agree that their vocabulary was increased by listening to songs, watching movies, playing games, and reading articles in English. However, no one chose to strongly disagree on this questionnaire statement. From the diagram, it can be concluded that the things related to English are more than sufficient in increasing the vocabulary of students because there are 90.3% of students who stated that things related to English helped them in improving

English vocabulary. In addition, Apriliya (2013) states that the media song can improve students' English speaking skills. This was added by Rejeki's (2019) research results, in his thesis, he found that there was a positive correlation between listening to English songs and pronunciation mastery in English speaking skills. He also added that, increasing the habit of listening to English songs will also improve students' English speaking skills. However, the results of the questionnaire in the statement from the results of Figure 3 cannot be used as a basis for decision making in the research hypothesis, because this statement does not indicate that they often watch movies, play games, and read articles in English. That is why although the number of people who agree on this statement is very high, they have many low test results.

Figure 4

The Diagram of How Long Students Like English

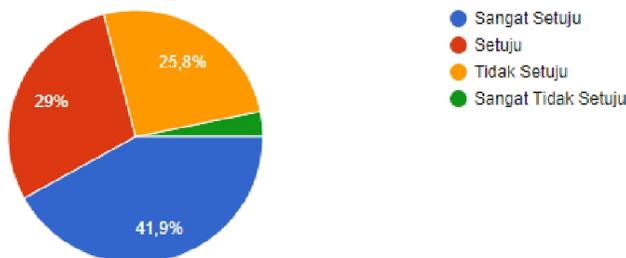


It can be seen in the diagram above that 29% of students have liked English since elementary school, 32.3% of students have liked English since junior high school, 22.6% of students have liked new English since high school, and 9.7% of students have just liked English. currently. The remaining 6.5% of students have never liked English. The questionnaire this time is still related

to the first and second statements. Regarding the fun and the length of time they enjoy English. The result can be seen that 61% of students like English since junior high school even longer than that. However, in the interview, it was found that all students who had high test scores liked English since high school, junior high school or longer than that.

Figure 5

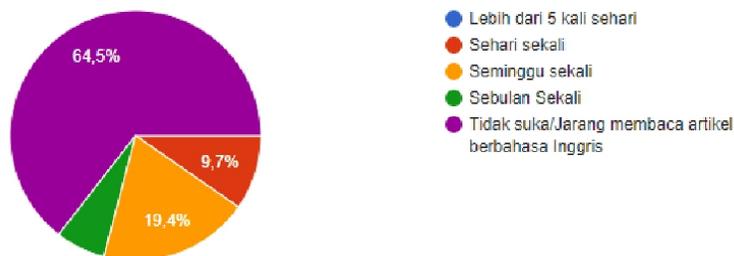
History Diagram of Students Who have Taken English Lessons Outside of School



In the diagram, it can be seen that 70.9% of students have never studied English outside of school, and the rest never took English lessons outside of school. From this it can be concluded that learning additional English outside of school does not help them much in improving students' English speaking skills. However, this questionnaire statement has a weakness, namely the absence of how long and how often they learn

additional English outside of school. In addition, the material on additional learning also greatly determines someone in improving their English speaking skills. For example, maybe someone has studied English but is more towards academic English or just learning extra about grammar. Meanwhile, in speaking skills, grammar is not the main thing.

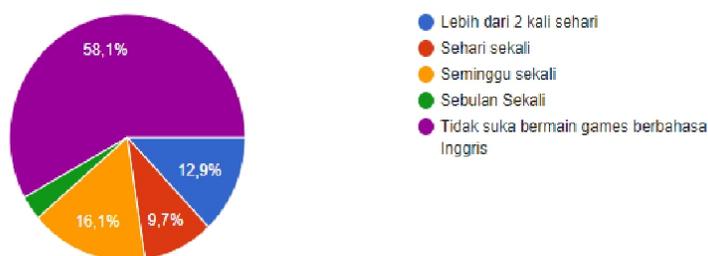
Figure 6
Diagram of how often students read articles in English



In the diagram, it can be seen that the biggest choice is that 64.5% of students do not like to read articles in English. In second place, 19.4% of students stated that they read an article in English once a day on average. The third position is the statement that 9.7% of students read English articles once a day on average. In the fourth position, there were 6.5% of students who stated that they read English articles on average only once a month and there were no students who chose to read statements more than 5 times a day

reading English articles. This diagram indicates that the average student does not really like reading English articles in their daily life. So that this statement can be used as a basis that if students are not diligent in reading articles in English, they will also have difficulty speaking English. This is in line with the results of the correlation test between reading interest and English skills conducted by Edri (2019), which states that there is a significant effect.

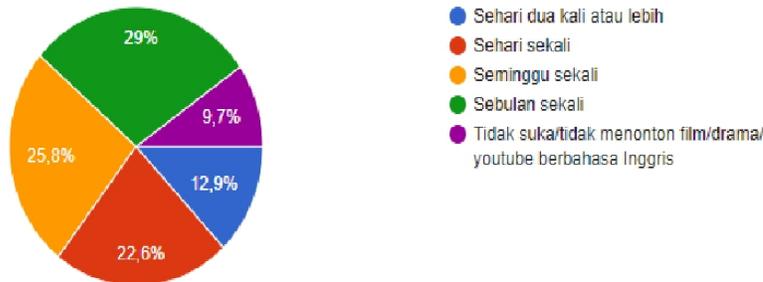
Figure 7
Diagram of how often students play games in English



In Figure 7, it can be seen that 58.1% of students do not like playing games in English. however 16.1% of students stated that they played games in English once a week on average. Furthermore, it reached 12.9% of students like to play games in English more than 2 times a day. The next position stated that 9.7% of students played games in English once a day on average and finally 3.2% of students stated that they played these games only once a month. Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) stated that using games to teach

language to learners at low level of profeciency helped to motivate them because it brings fun and the feeling of satisfaction even could reducing stress and anxiety. Meanwhile Ibrahim (2017) says games help young learners grasp new words without memorizing it because while they playing game they repeating the word that good to help them increasing the vocabularies. Thus, it is good to potential industry players to increase their vocabulary with playing English game regularly.

Figure 8



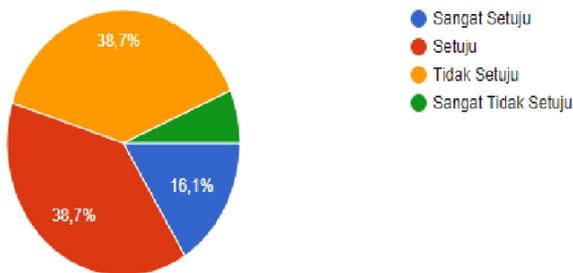
Percentage How Often Students Watch English Films / Videos

In Figure 8, it can be seen that only 35.5% of students watch English films/videos once a day or more. The remaining 25.8% of students watch once a week, 29% only watch it once a month and the remaining 9.7% never or rarely watch English videos / films. From this it can be seen that the students do not like English films, this is in line with their low test results. Hanifah (2019) in her journal obtained results in accordance with her hypothesis, that students' speaking skills improve when they are taught through films. Hanifah said that films motivated students to develop a framework for speaking and get new vocabulary from the film.

As stated by Edri (2019), the more quality of vocabulary mastery is, the students will be smarter and more skilled in speaking English. Meanwhile, Hendrawaty and Lutfiyansyah (2016), who teach their students about speaking skills with film fragments, say that showing a film experience that is in accordance with the theme of the lesson makes lessons more interesting. Through film fragments, participants can immediately understand the conversation in a shorter time, so that participants can easily record in their brain the language displayed and they are able to retell the contents of the film fragments with good language speech.

Figure 9

The percentage of student parents likes English

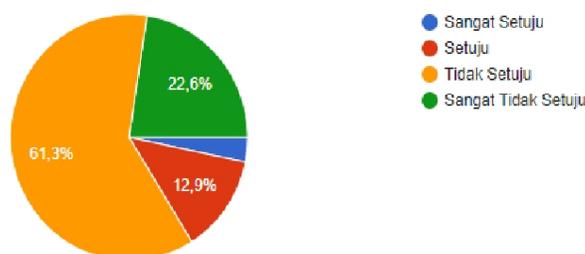


From the figure above, it is known that 54.8% of students' parents like English and the rest do not like English. There are more than 50% of student parents who love English. As before, the statement of "liking" is not enough for them or even their children to have good English speaking skills if they are not "close" to English. The researcher put this question because parents also one of students' circumstance that would influence

students' tendency in English itself. According to Iswara (2011) there are some factors that influence students interest in study, those are: motivation, study, parents attention, friends, environment, dreams, talent, hobby, and facility. Thus, parents could organize parents attention, environment, hobby, and facility if those parents also love English.

Figure 10

Percentage Diagram Whether or Not Students Have Participated in an English Competition



From the figure above, it can be seen that a total of 83.9% of students have never participated in an English competition and the rest have participated in an English competition. Here it can be concluded that students who have participated in English competitions are still very few compared to those who have never participated in competitions. From this diagram it can be seen that although many students like English, few students are able to channel their preferences through competitions. In other words, being happy with English alone is not enough to improve students' English speaking skills if they do not dare to show skills. In addition, in the interviews it was found that all students who had participated in English competitions had high English speaking skills scores.

Discussion

From the results obtained, it turns out that students love English, like things related to English, and even fond of English since a long time is not enough to raise the level of English speaking skills. It can be seen from the high percentage of students' enjoyment of English and the high percentage of the length of time that students love

English, but when viewed from the test results, there are still more than 60% of students who are in the low category. Therefore, students need closeness in speaking English in their daily activities. The low level of students' English speaking skills is closely related to their closeness in daily activities. For example, few students were able to read English articles twice a day compared to those who did it less frequently than that. Students who often play games in English are also much less than students who rarely play games in English. Not only that, the percentage of students who watched English films / videos more than once a day was still below 36% of the total number of students. This is quite unfortunate because according to Lestari (2011) in her journal, she says that watching movies can improve students speaking skills in each cycle she carries out. This statement also in line with Parmawati (2019) that says English films can improve speaking skills. The improvement of students' speaking skills can be seen in increase in the value of speaking skills. This shows that there is a comparison between students' speaking skills during the intervention and success performance criteria. The increase was

also observed from several aspects of their composition on manufactures. Students show improvement in speaking skills. Besides that student's confidence improve when speaking English. They are no longer afraid of making mistakes. In addition, the subjects in this study, namely students also did not like to challenge their abilities in competition, even for students whose test results were in the high category, not all of them had ever participated in an English competition.

In addition as previous research, Dewi (2016) states that there are several factors that cause the students' speaking skills are low, namely as follows: a) English is not used outside the classroom or inside community as a foreign language, b) Lack of exposure to English in the community and environment, c) learning English on campus places more emphasis on grammar than speaking skills, d) Students are too embarrassed and afraid to make mistakes during speaking practice, e) English is not the main requirement on campus or in the environment, unless there is one the opportunity to travel to an English speaking country for further education or tourist visits. So if these potential industry players want to increase their speaking skills for work needs in the future they should also use and receive English not only in the classroom but also in the outside of the classroom regularly for example playing English games, watching English film with or without subtitle, watching English video, reading English articles, and even dare themselves to join English competition. In other words, all data collection instruments such as tests, questionnaires, and interviews can be drawn a red line, that someone could have better English speaking skills if they are close to English than those who are not. This closeness is not only from their love of English, or their parents' joy of English, but also their daily actions, for example, they often read English articles, listen to English songs, watch English films, and even play games in English language. Not only that, they also have to be able to challenge themselves to various kinds of English competitions so that they can find out their weaknesses against English.

CONCLUSION

This study suggests that even in big cities, the level of proficiency in English speaking skills of students as potential industrial players is still low. The low level of proficiency of these skills is closely related to their closeness to the English language. From this research, it can be concluded that the closeness of English can be in terms of how often they read articles, watch movies, play games, and listen to English songs. Therefore, it is recommended that English lecturers or teachers use teaching methods that can bring students closer to English so that they can always be close to matters related to English, because just being fond of English is not enough to can increase the level of students' English speaking skills.

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