



The Study of Early Childhood Character in Semurup Rawa Pening Hamlet Semarang Regency

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Abstract

Semurup Hamlet is a tourist village located in the Rawa Pening area of Semarang Regency. As a tourist village with a large number of visitors, it has an influence on the character development of early childhood. This study aims (1) to know and describe the character of independence, responsibility, religion, and courtesy of early childhood, (2) to find out and describe the efforts of parents and the community in educating the character of early childhood, and (3) to know and describe the obstacles faced by parents and the community in educating the character of early childhood in the Semurup Hamlet, Semarang Regency. This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method. Data collection techniques are interviews, observation, and documentation. The obtained data is examined for the validity of the data by triangulation of data sources and methods. The results showed that (1) early childhood in Semurup Hamlet have the character of positive and negative independence, positive responsibility, positive religious, and positive and negative manners, (2) efforts made by parents in educating the character of children early by habituating, giving examples, and giving rewards, while community efforts are to provide advice and support for every educational activity, (3) obstacles that are experienced by parents in educating the character of the age child are internal factors including busyness of parents and the age of child, external factors include the influence of the environment around the residence and the development of information and communication technology, while the obstacle faced by the community is communication with parents.

How to Cite

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INTRODUCTION

The big part of educational institutions tend to pay more attention to skills and academic intelligence (hard skills), but they do not develop character education (soft skills) (Pranoto & Hong, 2014). Even though both are very much needed for the development of children and the nation in the future because the success of a person is not only determined by the knowledge and hard skills, but the ability of soft skills is also very needed in living the real life (Bahri, 2015).

Character building can be given to children from an early age. Early age (0-6 years) can be said to be a golden age (golden age) and very influential on the future of children. By providing character building from an early age, it is hoped that children can grow up to be superior, knowledgeable, characteristic, and noble adults (Pranoto & Hong, 2014). Megawangi (2004) states that there are nine pillars of character that should be taught to children; they are, a) love of God and all of His creations, b) independence and responsibility, c) honesty, d) respect and courtesy, e) generous, like helping, mutual cooperation, f) self-confidence, creative, hard-working, g) leadership and justice, h) kind and humble, i) tolerance and peace, unity. These nine pillars can be used as a reference in instilling character education from an early age.

The implementation of character education itself requires a long process and requires attention and guidance from all parties. Both the family, the school and the community around the child's residence. Such attention and guidance can be developed with the provision of leadership from adults around children (Pertiwi, 2014). People around the children are in an environment called the microsystem environment which consists of families, peers, communities, and schools that interact more directly with children (Santrock, 2002).

The family is the smallest unit of society where individuals live and interact. The family is the first place for children to get an education. In families, especially parents, have an important role in preparing children to become the next generation who have good character qualities (Khoiriyah, 2015). The community is a place for learning children after family. The community environment will affect children's growth, especially in the social aspects of children (Khusnah, 2013).

Research on the influence of the environment on child development by Nuryani (2015) on early childhood development in the localiza-

tion area, states that the environment has its own part in shaping the character of children and is a place of learning for children. Another study conducted by Ningtyas (2014) about the character of coastal children, stated that the community environment has an important role in providing stimulus and avoiding the emergence of negative characters in early childhood.

There are many new tourist spots that have sprung up and developed in Indonesia nowadays. Either tourist attractions in big cities that offer various types of modern games or in villages that offer natural scenery and educational tours. This phenomenon has a positive impact on the economic development of society. One of the tourist attractions in the Semarang Regency is the Blue Bridge in the Semurup Hamlet, Asinan Village, Bawen sub-district. Based on observations, the obtained data that in addition to being famous for its blue bridge. Semurup has natural resources that can be used as a source of income for surrounding communities, such as swamp mud, swamp fish, and water hyacinth. The presence of swamp mud, fish, water hyacinth, and the existence of tourist attractions are used as a source of income for the rupiah.

This condition makes the Semurup Hamlet more crowded with various activities of people passing by from morning to evening and also visited by tourists from outside the area compared to other village in Asinan village. Based on preliminary observations it was found that most visitors are adults who came from various regions and had different characters. Some come to take mud, fish, and water hyacinth, some are just fishing, dating at tourist attractions, or just hanging out and talking. However, some visitors have negative habits such as throwing trash into the swamp and saying with curse words, which are finally imitated by children, such as "*asu, cocote, gundulmu kuwi*". As stated by Nuryani (2015) that behavior carried out by children is the result of imitation of parents and people around them.

As explained earlier that the presence of tourist attractions will have a positive impact on the economic development of the community. People who used to not have a busy life or no work, by the existence of this Blue Bridge tourist attractions make people flock to open businesses, such as selling food, opening boat rental services and fishing spots. This condition has made parents and the community since morning already busy with various activities to make money. This has an impact on the limited time parents meet with their children, but on the other hand, it makes children independent and responsible for their

needs every day. Starting in the morning going to school, then going home and playing, and in the afternoon the children go to the Al-Qur'an education place to study religion. However, it is very unfortunate, the words uttered by children are sometimes not polite and not in accordance with the age of the child. From the observations and preliminary interviews, this study will focus on four character values, namely: independence, responsibility, religious, and courtesy.

The four character values need to be instilled early, in order to prepare children to live their lives and future challenges. Independent character will make children dare to make a choice and be responsible for their choices. By instilling independent character from an early age, it is hoped that in the future children will become individuals who do not depend on others and are able to create something new and beneficial to many people (Maulina, 2014). Planting responsibility character from an early age is a useful form of investment. When an adult is a child he will be a person who is capable of being responsible for himself, his family, society, and religion. The attitude of responsibility makes a person have a sense of discipline, persistence, being able to control themselves and will make children more aware and aware of what is good and bad in acting and responsible for their choices (Khaeruddin, et al., 2011). Planting religious character since early childhood is very important because religion is related to God and the religion that is followed by one and who will become a guide in living his life. Religion will lead someone to continue to do good, both for themselves and others (Satriawan & Sutiarmo, 2017). While the character of manners is a character that reflects the true person. A person who has a polite and polite character will be able to put himself wherever he is. Able to respect and respect other people regardless of their origin (Syriac, 2017).

Based on the description above, the formulation of the problem in this study are: (1) how is the character of independence, responsibility, religion, and courtesy of early childhood in Semurup Rawa Pening Hamlet, Semarang Regency?, (2) how are the efforts of parents and the community in educating the character of early childhood in Semurup Hamlet, Semarang Regency?, (3) what are the obstacles that is experienced by parents and the community in educating the character of early childhood in Semurup Hamlet, Semarang Regency?

The expected objectives are: (1) to know and describe the character of independence, responsibility, religion, and early childhood man-

ners in Semurup Rawa Pening Hamlet, Semarang Regency, (2) to know and describe the efforts of parents and the community in educating characters early childhood in Semurup hamlet, Semarang Regency, (3) to find out and describe the obstacles faced by parents and the community in educating the character of early childhood in Semurup hamlet, Semarang Regency.

METHOD

The approach of this study uses descriptive qualitative research method with an approach method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, which is used to examine the condition of natural objects (Sugiyono, 2016). This research is conducted in Semurup Hamlet, Asinan Village, Bawen district, Semarang district. Subjects in the study consist of 3 parents who still had children aged 5-6 years, 4 people consisting of village chief, hamlet chief, and kindergarten teachers, and 3 children aged 5-6 years. The reason for choosing the research subject is due to the consideration that the data and information obtained by the researchers are not unilateral from the parents, but rather there is information from the community and early childhood. So that the obtained data and information complement each other and strengthen the findings of the researcher. Methods of data collection using interviews, observation, and documentation. The data obtained are examined for the validity of the data by triangulation of data sources and methods.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Semurup is a tourist village located in the Asinan village, Bawen sub-district, Semarang Regency. This hamlet is famous for its Blue Bridge tourism and has natural resources such as swamp mud, various swamp fish, and water hyacinth. Semurup has 6 RTs with 1,237 residents. The number of early childhood from 2013-2018 is 101 children, and children aged 5-6 years are 14 children consisting of 9 boys and 5 girls. Based on this number, the researcher chooses 3 children with the criteria children aged 5-6 years, attending one of the educational institutions in Semurup hamlet, and every day living in the Semurup hamlet.

Character of Independence, Responsibility, Religion, and Courtesy

In this study focused on the character of our independence, responsibility, religion, and manners. The character development of early

childhood in Semurup hamlet can be said to be positive and negative. As in the development of the character of the independence of early childhood in the Semurup hamlet, it is fairly positive and negative. This can be seen from the condition of the early age children who are left to work by their parents and those who do not. Children who are accustomed to being left behind by their parents work more independently.

Researcher: "According to you, are early childhood in Semurup independent or not? And what is the cause of the child independent and not independent?"

OT 2: "If parents are accompanied by parents, they are more spoiled, parents who do everything, those who are left to work are even more independent. Know that his parents are far away, work is only dependent on the sitting, then the sitting is also a stranger. If he wants to ask for something not like his own parents".

Parents go to work before the child goes to school and returns home in the afternoon or evening. Parents prepare needs such as eating and school uniforms, but children must use school supplies, take a shower, change clothes, go to school or recite on their own. Whereas children who are accompanied by their parents every day are more spoiled. These children are accustomed to doing activities with their parents. Even when schooling and reciting are delivered by his parents. In line with the opinion of Maulina (2014) that the level of independence of early childhood children who are left to work by their parents is higher than that in early childhood who are cared for or supported by their parents.

Children who are left to work by their parents not only become independent but children also become accustomed to being responsible. The attitude of responsibility in children can be seen from how children are responsible for their duties, such as learning, clearing toys at their original place, and also managing when school, playing, reciting, studying without being ordered by parents.

Researcher: "According to you, what is the responsibility for early childhood?"

OT 1: "Know the time when to play, when to study, when to pray, when to rest. Keep the toys if you have finished playing, putting uniforms, shoes in place, do not throw them away."

Children are accustomed to carrying out what is their responsibility, playing after going home from school, when they hear the sound of the adhan prayer they go home to take a bath and go to the Al-Quran education place to study religion. At night the children study on their own

and sometimes with parents.

Researcher: "According to you, what is the responsibility for early childhood?"

OT 2: "You can be responsible if you are asked whether you have homework then do the homework without being told to do it".

Children have been able to take responsibility for themselves by completing tasks and obligations on their own. This is in line with the opinion of Ardila, et al. (2017) which states that responsibility is the attitude and behavior of a person in carrying out and completing their duties and obligations.

Religious development in children is very important because religion is the most important foundation in human life. The development of the religious character of early childhood gives a positive appearance. The Semurup community environment is very thick with religious education and religious activities such as routine recitation. Semurup has 3 places of religious education (TPA/TPQ) that are used to educate children's religion from an early age.

Researcher: "What do you think about religious attitudes in early childhood?"

OT 2: "Knowing worship knows religion. When the child is 4 years old by the time when he entered kindergarten, I entered him to Al-Quran education. At first, I delivered him every afternoon, then I will wait, but now I don't. Later, after sunset, I will repeat again teaching children to learn and recite again."

This is in line with the opinion of Megawangi (2009) that every community living in one community environment, can certainly have one place of worship that serves as a means of fostering and educating the religion of the local community including fostering the character of early childhood. The neighborhood that is thick with religious life will have a positive influence on the development of early childhood religion. As stated by the Ministry of Education (2011) that planting religious characters can be done by teaching children to do worship, teaching religious knowledge adopted by children.

The development of good religious character does not mean that the character of good manners in early childhood is also good. In Semurup, the character of early childhood manners appears positive and negative. Children behave respectfully, greeting others, shaking hands and talking well using polite words only at certain times, such as when in school, TPA, and at home with their parents. When with parents the child is accustomed to greeting, shaking hands when there are guests, speaking well, and using polite

clothes and as needed. When you go to school wear a uniform and while reciting using Muslim clothes, sarongs, koko, and caps. Different when outside the home, children tend to be less concerned with the presence of others. When asked, the child answers in an impolite language, swims in the swamp using only underwear, and littering. This is because children imitate tourist behavior.

Researcher: "According to you, how is the attitude of manners early childhood at an early age?"

OT 2: Yes, polite, children in here will greet if meet the older ones. However, children who have grown up sometimes speak bad words that are imitated by younger children. Not only that, but a lot of outsiders fishing from morning to evening also badmouthing, so if my child played with his friends until the swamp area, I was scared if they join them."

What children do is a result of imitating adults around them. What the children hears and sees, whether it's a good or wrong child will imitate it. Because children do not really understand what is good and bad. Adults around children should provide examples or reprimands to children who behave in ways that are not in accordance with their development and are contrary to the norms and rules that apply. In harmony with the opinion of Nuryani (2015) which states that children do a behavior that is not good because they mimic the words and behavior of surrounding adults who are often ignorant and behave disrespectfully, such as speaking using harsh words, not reprimanding or giving examples good for children.

Efforts of Parents and Communities in Educating Early Childhood Character in Semurup Hamlet

Parents

The efforts made by parents in instilling positive character in early childhood is through several methods. First through small habits such as getting children to clean up toys, putting shoes and clothes in place, getting used to being able to adjust the time, getting used to eating, bathing, changing their own clothes, getting used to greetings, praying, and getting used to worship.

Researcher: "What efforts have you made in educating positive character in early childhood?"

OT 3: "I get them used to, if she plays it must be returned, incidentally I never allow my child to leave the house. So, at home, if she plays it, she must tidy it. Then I get used to also the

time to eat, sleep, going to TPA to take part in studying religion at the TPA, after the sunset sometimes I taught again with her father".

Through this little habituation, it is hoped that it will become a habit that is useful for children in carrying out daily life to adult children. In line with the opinion of Adityasari and Elfitasari (2014) which states that habituation is the basic and important capital given by parents in educating the character of children, and preparing children to be ready in facing all kinds of challenges in the future. In harmony with the research of Pertiwi (2014) which states that habituation methods that are done well and done every day will be useful and beneficial for the lives of children later.

Parents also provide examples or examples directly to their children, because children tend to imitate what is done by those around them.

Researcher: "What efforts have you made in educating positive character in early childhood?"

OT 2: "Teaching directly by example, I give an example of doing good, that child imitates his parents, so I must give a good example ...".

Parents not only provide motivation or just tell children to behave well, but also act as a model or example for their children. So from that parents must give a good example to their children, so that the attitudes, behavior, and words of parents will indirectly be a motivation for their children. This is supported by the results of research by Husnita (2013) which states that one of the strategies in character education is to use parenting strategies from adults or people around children. In line with the opinion of Pertiwi (2014) that children learn through imitation of the habits and behavior of those around them. Exemplary is a process given in character education. Providing consistent examples of people around the child will help educate the character.

Giving gifts or rewards is one of the efforts that are often used by parents in educating children. Parents use gifts or rewards as rewards that are used to encourage and motivate their children.

Researcher: "Are there other efforts you have made other than by and giving examples directly to children?"

OT 2: "Sure! I give a gift so that the child will be more enthusiastic, more obedient, willing to listen and work on parental orders."

Parents can motivate their children by giving gifts after the child has succeeded in fulfilling the wishes of parents. Gifts that are given are not always fancy and expensive but in simple forms

such as taking a child to go swimming or giving snacks that the child likes. In line with the results of research by Sabartiningsih, et al. (2018) which states that giving gifts can improve good actions for children. Awards given are tailored to the situation, needs, and desires of the child. In line with the results of Mufidah's research (2012) which states that giving gifts to children can increase the early childhood's motivation to learn.

Community

The community is those who are older, who live around children, and do not have family ties or blood ties, but are in one environment with children, so they can see children's behavior and provide and teach examples of positive behavior, and prohibit or remind children when children do negative deeds (Subianto, 2013). The community itself has an important role in educating the positive character of children. The effort made by the community in educating the character of early childhood is by giving advice. Advice can open the child's eyes and will push him toward a better situation. Providing advice is very suitable to be applied to children.

Researcher: "According to you as a member of the community here, what efforts have been made to educate positive characters in early childhood? For example, when you see or hear children not doing well?"

M 1: "I give a bit of advice if there are children who make mistakes. It's not wrong for us that older people also provide advice that guides children".

Researcher: "According to you as a member of the community here, what efforts have you been made to educate positive characters in early childhood? For example, when you see or hear a child doing bad things?"

M 3: "Reproach him subtly, not scolded. Then we mention the reason why he should not do that".

The community provides explanations and reasons for children why children are not allowed to do anything that is not polite. In accordance with the findings of Pertiwi (2014) which states that giving advice is one of the most suitable efforts given to children compared to giving hard actions or scolding children. Sentences that are good, smooth, and in accordance with the age of the child, will be easier to understand and understand the child.

In addition, the efforts made by the community are to provide support for every educational activity.

Researcher: "Apart from giving advice to

children, are there any other efforts you have as a community leader here to support the development of character educators in early childhood?"

M 1: "As a community and community leaders themselves, yes, they provide support for positive activities for children, help improve educational facilities. Alhamdulillah, in Semurup there is already a playground, kindergarten, and TPA, which are suitable for use in education".

In addition, the efforts made by the community are to provide support for every educational activity.

Researcher: "In addition to giving advice to children, are there any other efforts that you have made as community leaders here to support the development of character educators in early childhood?"

M 1: "As a community and community leaders. I provide support for positive activities for children, helping to improve education facilities. Alhamdulillah, in Semurup there is already a playground, TK, TPA, which is suitable for use in education."

As a community that lives in one environment and for a long time, it is certain that every member of the community will cooperate in developing their environmental progress, including in building better education. One of the efforts made by the community is to provide support in educating the character of children, both in the form of money, services, and labor. This is in accordance with Government Regulation of Indonesian Republic No. 39 of 1992 concerning community participation in chapter III paragraph 1 of national education chapter 4, community participation in the establishment and implementation of school education or outside school education, except for official education. Articles 5, 6, and 7. Procurement and provision of assistance funds in the form of donations, loans, scholarships, and other forms, providing assistance for space, buildings, and land, as well as assistance with educational equipment.

Parents and Community's Obstacle in Building the Early Childhood Character in Sumurup Hamlet

Parents

Building children's character is not an easy thing to do. Everyone, whether parents or the community, must have obstacles faced during the process of educating positive characters in children. There are obstacles faced by parents, first the internal factors or those originating from the inside in the form of parents' busyness.

Researcher: "According to your as a pa-

rent, what obstacles are faced in educating the character of early childhood?”

OT 2: “Parents’ busyness. Yes, I do partial sitting, like it or not, I have to finish work, so sometimes I stay so that playing with friends is important if the child is not fussy”

Some parents choose to work in a factory and leave their children with caregivers. While others choose to work at home while looking after their children. Although every day with children, parents are less focused on taking care of children, because they have side jobs such as making chips, keeping stalls, and dressing. The busyness of the parents’ works resulting in the family’s economic needs being met, but the time together with the child decreases and the child lacks the attention of his master. Parents cannot control and pay attention to children directly. Parents are busy working, and inevitably have to complete their work and children are left to carry out their own activities without parental supervision.

In accordance with the opinion of Khusnah (2013) which states that the busyness of parents makes the intensity of meetings with children relatively shorter, and this becomes an obstacle in providing character education to children, and makes the application of character education to children less than optimal. This is in accordance with the results of Nuryani’s research (2015) which states that the limited time parents meet with children is one of the inhibiting factors for moral values.

In addition, the age of early childhood development is one of the obstacles faced by parents. Early childhood is in a period of self-centeredness where children are selfish, as they wish, win alone, and do not want to budge.

Researcher: “According to you as a parent, what obstacles are you faced in educating the character of early childhood?”

OT 1: “... He often his own will. If told, the answer turns to tell. But I am the parent, I still teach good things, how do I do it, let the child obey But I do not use violence that hits children, at least I nag at them.”

Parents have reminded children not to play there because the place is slippery, but the child still goes there and finally the child slips. When asking for money for snacks, and not given the child keep asking while crying and screaming. The nature of the child is still volatile according to conditions that are natural to children, and difficult to predict. Sometimes when it is forbidden to do something, the child feels like he is being governed and continues to do what is prohibited by his parents. In accordance with the results of research by Yuliani, et al. (2013) which states that

parents have difficulty in understanding children’s attitudes that are easily changed, not obedient and being spoiled so that children tend not to obey. Plus children who have started associating with friends outside their homes, so that children get influence from outside and then imitated.

The second obstacle is external factors or those from outside, namely the influence of relationships in the environment around the child. The environment around children which is a place where children hang out and play greatly influences the formation of children’s character. A good surrounding environment will affect the course of the formation of a good character, and vice versa. A bad environment will have a negative impact on the formation of a child’s character.

Researcher: “According to you as a parent, what obstacles that you face in building the character of early childhood?”

OT 3: “... The environment. The children play outside together with their friends, and sometimes when they go home they like to mimic the talk of their friends’ behavior. Moreover, if they play near the swamp, many adults talk harshly, and then the child follows along.”

Children imitate the behavior of their peers, and also people around their environment. When there is a good thing the child will imitate the good thing and when there are bad things the child will imitate bad things. This is in accordance with the results of the Nuryani (2015) which states that the inhibiting factors for character growth in early childhood are the unfavorable environment. Reaffirmed by Yuliani, et al. (2013) which states that the environment is less supportive will be a major influence on children’s development. When a child is outside the home or with a friend, the child tends to follow what his friend says and what the child hears or sees without knowing whether it is good or bad.

In addition, the influence of increasingly advanced information and communication technology also has an influence on the process of character education in early childhood.

Researcher: “According to you as a parent, what obstacles you face in building the character of early childhood?”

OT 2: “... If they already hold the cellphone there is a need for internet data quota to download the game, continue to play the game, if they play the game forget the time”.

At present, almost everyone, either children, adolescents, or adults have cellphones. Even early childhood now understands how to use mobile phones. Mobile phones can be used easily and can be used at any time also have a lot

of interesting entertainment, such as social media and games or games.

Researcher: "According to you as a parent, what obstacles you face in building the character of early childhood? "

OT 1: "Yes, tablet phone. Almost all children have their own cellphones, my little ones also ask. Yes, I give it. Poor him, if he sees the others. It is good actually if it is difficult to do school work, the older brother can search through the cellphone, but yes there are also bad things, if the little ones already hold it, they will play the game, there are lots of impressions when ordered ... "

With the many conveniences offered by mobile phones or smartphones make it easier for children to learn. When children experience learning difficulties children, but on the other hand make children forget the time and lazy in doing things like learning and worship. Children are more happy and interested in spending time playing mobile phones. This is in accordance with Khusnah's research (2013) which states that the influence of advanced technology makes it an obstacle in the implementation of character education.

Community

The society which is part of childhood development microsystems has a role that is also important than the role of parents and families in educating positive characters in children. Communities are faced with obstacles that hinder the process of character education. The obstacle faced by the Semurup hamlet community is communication with people.

Researcher: "According to you, are there any obstacles faced in collaborating with parents to educate the character of early childhood?"

M 1: "Communication with parents, especially parents who work in factories and who provide fishing services. Because like it or not must always be in place, because visitors keep coming".

The busyness of parents who work for money every day, from morning to evening, will certainly be a problem in the process of character education. Parents are so confident and trusting of their caregivers and neighbors in educating positive characters. While neighbors and the community also have their own busy life. Basically, there is a bridge that can be used by parents and the community in conducting communication which is by having meetings or deliberations between residents.

Researcher: "According to you, are there any obstacles faced in working with parents to

educate the character of early childhood?"

M 2: "... At least through meetings at the school to discuss the development of their children, it is also rare for parents to come, because they are busy working, so it is difficult for direct communication with parents".

However, in reality, the communication made between the community and parents of children is very difficult, because the parents are too busy at work, so it is difficult to be invited to meet in person at regular meetings or meetings in hamlet organizations and children's schools. In accordance with the statement of Pusitaningtyas (2016) which states that the existence of good communication between parents, the community, and the teacher will help create a synergy between them. Through good communication between parents and the community, it is possible to create a better environment to foster positive character development in children.

CONCLUSION

The characters of independence, responsibility, religion, and courtesy of early childhood in Semurup Hamlet can be said to be positive and negative. (1) Early childhood in Semurup hamlet has a positive and negative character of independence, (2) character of positive responsibility, (3) positive religious character, (4) positive and negative manners.

The efforts made by parents are to make habituations, provide direct examples to children, and provide rewards. Whereas community efforts are to provide advice and provide support for any activities aimed at promoting education, both in the form of material support or personnel.

The obstacles that are experienced by parents consist of two, which are internal and external factors. Internal factors include parent's busyness and age of child development. External factors include the influence of relationships in the environment around the children's residence and the development of ICT. While the constraints of the community are difficult to communicate with parents.

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