

Constructing Artificial Intelligence in Indonesian Universities' Official News: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Muhammad Fahri Jaya Sudding*

fahrisudding@unm.ac.id

Fakultas Bahasa dan Sastra, Universitas Negeri Makassar

*corresponding author

Geminastiti Sakkir

geminastitisakkir@unm.ac.id

Fakultas Bahasa dan Sastra, Universitas Negeri Makassar

Sudding

sudding@unm.ac.id

Fakultas Matematika dan Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam, Universitas Negeri Makassar

Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a central topic in higher education, influencing teaching, research, and institutional development. While previous studies have primarily examined AI from technological, pedagogical, and ethical perspectives, limited attention has been given to how AI is discursively constructed through institutional communication. This study investigates the discursive construction of AI in official news published by selected Indonesian universities. Employing a qualitative research design, the study applies Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework to analyze official news articles from Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Universitas Airlangga, and Universitas Negeri Makassar. The analysis focuses on three interconnected dimensions: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. The findings reveal four dominant discourses that shape the representation of AI: AI as educational innovation, AI as institutional excellence, AI as future competence, and AI as responsible and collaborative technology. Linguistically, these discourses are realized through positive evaluative vocabulary, future-oriented lexical choices, and institutional narratives emphasizing innovation, research, collaboration, and digital transformation. The study argues that official university news functions not only as a medium for disseminating information but also as an institutional discourse that legitimizes AI adoption and constructs universities as innovative, future-oriented, and globally competitive institutions. The findings contribute to Critical Discourse Analysis by demonstrating how institutional communication actively shapes public understanding of emerging technologies within higher education. Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of examining official university news as a strategic site where technological meanings, institutional identities, and educational ideologies are negotiated through language.

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence; critical discourse analysis; institutional discourse; official university news.*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed the landscape of higher education. Universities are increasingly required not only to adopt AI-based technologies but also to define how such technologies should be understood, used, and governed within academic life. In this context, AI is not merely a technological object. It is also a discursive object constructed through language, institutional communication, and public narratives (Ahmed, T, et al., 2023).

Indonesian universities have responded to the emergence of AI through various official news publications. These texts report seminars, research collaborations, expert opinions, academic initiatives, and institutional programs related to AI. Although such news articles appear to function as ordinary institutional reports, they also play an important role in shaping public understanding of AI. Through particular lexical choices, evaluative expressions, metaphors, and institutional voices, universities construct AI as innovation, opportunity, challenge, ethical responsibility, and future competence (Dirk, & Kim 2020).

Moreover, official university news is therefore an important site for discourse analysis. Unlike independent media reports, official news is produced by institutions to represent their own academic identity, public contribution, and strategic positioning. In the case of AI, universities may use official news to present themselves as adaptive, innovative, globally oriented, and socially responsible institutions (Enkelejda, 2023). This makes official news a valuable object for examining how higher education institutions participate in the broader discourse of digital transformation.

Previous studies on AI in higher education have largely focused on adoption, implementation, learning effectiveness, academic integrity, student perception, and ethical concerns. However, less attention has been given to how AI is discursively constructed in official university communication, particularly in the Indonesian context (Yogesh, 2023). This gap is important because institutional discourse does not merely describe reality; it actively shapes how technology is understood, normalized, and legitimized within academic communities.

Furthermore, using Critical Discourse Analysis, this study investigates how AI is represented in selected official news articles published by Indonesian universities. The study focuses on the linguistic and ideological construction of AI by examining vocabulary, modality, evaluative language, and institutional positioning. By doing so, this research aims to reveal how Indonesian universities frame AI as part of educational innovation, institutional excellence, ethical awareness, and future-oriented academic transformation. Then this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) How is artificial intelligence constructed in Indonesian universities' official news? (2) What linguistic strategies are used to represent artificial intelligence in the news texts? and (3) What institutional ideologies are reflected in the representation of artificial intelligence?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Artificial intelligence has become one of the most transformative technologies influencing higher education worldwide. Universities increasingly integrate AI into teaching, learning,

research, assessment, and academic administration to improve educational quality and institutional efficiency. Recent studies have primarily examined AI from the perspectives of technology adoption, learning effectiveness, academic integrity, digital literacy, and ethical concerns. These studies generally emphasize how students and lecturers perceive AI, factors influencing its acceptance, and the opportunities and challenges associated with its implementation (John, 1990).

The growing adoption of generative AI, particularly since the emergence of large language models, has further intensified discussions regarding responsible AI use in universities. Scholars argue that AI has the potential to support personalized learning, automate administrative tasks, enhance research productivity, and improve students' learning experiences. At the same time, concerns regarding plagiarism, bias, misinformation, privacy, and overreliance on AI have also become prominent topics within higher education research. Consequently, universities are increasingly expected to establish clear institutional responses that balance innovation with ethical responsibility.

Although these studies provide valuable insights into AI implementation, they predominantly conceptualize AI as a technological innovation or educational tool. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to examining how universities themselves construct AI through institutional communication. Official university news represents an important communicative space where institutions publicly define the meaning, value, and purpose of AI. Therefore, understanding AI requires not only examining its implementation but also investigating how universities linguistically construct AI within their institutional discourse.

Official University News as Institutional Discourse

Official university news is more than a medium for disseminating institutional information. It constitutes institutional discourse through which universities communicate organizational values, academic achievements, strategic priorities, and institutional identities. Unlike independent journalistic reports, official news is intentionally produced to represent the university's perspective and strengthen its public image. Consequently, the selection of topics, lexical choices, quotations, and evaluative language reflects particular institutional interests and communicative objectives.

Institutional discourse plays a significant role in shaping public perceptions of emerging technologies. Through official news, universities do not simply report events related to AI but actively construct narratives concerning innovation, research excellence, digital transformation, and global competitiveness. Such narratives contribute to legitimizing institutional policies and positioning universities as leading actors in technological advancement. Therefore, official news serves as a strategic platform through which universities negotiate their identities within increasingly competitive higher education environments.

Previous discourse studies have examined institutional communication in various contexts, including university branding, educational policy, organizational identity, and public relations. However, studies specifically investigating the discourse of AI in official university news remain limited, particularly within Indonesian higher education. This gap suggests the need to explore how institutional language contributes to constructing particular understandings of AI and its role in contemporary universities.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) views language as a form of social practice that is closely connected to ideology, power, and institutional interests. Rather than treating texts as neutral representations of reality, CDA assumes that discourse actively constructs social knowledge, legitimizes particular perspectives, and reproduces power relations. This perspective makes CDA particularly suitable for examining institutional texts, where language often reflects broader organizational goals and ideological orientations (Fairclough, 1992).

Among various CDA approaches, Fairclough's three-dimensional framework remains one of the most influential analytical models. Fairclough proposes that discourse should be analyzed through three interconnected dimensions: text, discursive practice, and social practice (Fairclough, 1995). The textual dimension focuses on linguistic features such as vocabulary, grammar, modality, and evaluation. Discursive practice examines how texts are produced, distributed, and interpreted within particular institutional contexts. Social practice situates discourse within broader sociocultural, political, and ideological structures that influence meaning construction.

Applying Fairclough's framework enables researchers to move beyond describing linguistic features toward explaining why certain representations emerge and whose interests they serve. In the context of AI, CDA provides a valuable lens for investigating how universities construct technological innovation, institutional authority, educational transformation, and future-oriented identities through official communication (Gee, 2014).

Research Gap

Existing studies on artificial intelligence in higher education have predominantly focused on technology adoption, user acceptance, ethical issues, digital literacy, and pedagogical effectiveness. Although these studies significantly contribute to understanding AI implementation, they provide limited explanation of how AI is discursively represented within institutional communication. Similarly, previous discourse studies concerning higher education have largely examined policy documents, university branding, or educational reforms without specifically addressing AI-related institutional narratives.

Furthermore, research investigating official university news as a site of AI discourse remains scarce, particularly in the Indonesian higher education context. This absence limits our understanding of how universities employ language to construct AI as educational innovation, institutional excellence, future competence, and responsible technology. Addressing this gap, the present study applies Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to examine how selected Indonesian universities construct artificial intelligence through their official news publications (Fairclough, 2003). By focusing on institutional discourse rather than technology adoption, this study offers a complementary perspective that highlights the linguistic and ideological dimensions of AI representation in higher education.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as proposed by Fairclough (1995). CDA was selected because it enables researchers to examine

how language constructs social reality, institutional identity, and ideological meanings. Rather than viewing language as a neutral medium of communication, CDA considers discourse as a social practice through which power relations, values, and institutional perspectives are produced and reproduced. This approach is particularly appropriate for investigating how Indonesian universities construct artificial intelligence (AI) in their official news publications.

Data Sources

The data consisted of official online news articles concerning artificial intelligence published on the websites of selected Indonesian universities. Purposive sampling was employed to select news articles that explicitly discussed AI, digital transformation, AI-based research, AI in education, or institutional initiatives related to artificial intelligence. The selected universities included Universitas Indonesia (UI), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), and Universitas Negeri Makassar (UNM). These universities were selected because they actively publish institutional news regarding AI and represent different public higher education institutions in Indonesia.

The unit of analysis comprised headlines, lead paragraphs, quotations, lexical choices, clauses, and evaluative expressions that represented AI within each news article. Rather than analyzing the news articles as isolated texts, this study examined how linguistic choices collectively constructed particular representations of AI across institutional communication.

Data Collection

The data were collected through document analysis. Official university websites were searched using the keywords "Artificial Intelligence", "AI", and "Kecerdasan Buatan". News articles that specifically discussed AI-related activities, research collaborations, educational initiatives, seminars, or institutional programs were selected. Duplicate articles and news report unrelated to higher education were excluded from the analysis.

After selection, each article was downloaded and compiled into a research corpus. Relevant textual segments containing descriptions, institutional statements, expert quotations, and policy-related expressions were identified and coded for further analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis, consisting of textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice (Wodak & Meyer, 2016);

The first stage involved textual analysis. The researchers examined linguistic features including vocabulary, lexical repetition, evaluative language, modality, nominalization, and metaphorical expressions used to represent artificial intelligence. Particular attention was given to how AI was described, evaluated, and associated with educational development, innovation, competence, and institutional identity. Then, the second stage focused on discursive practice. This stage investigated how the news texts were produced as institutional communication. It explored how universities positioned themselves as producers of knowledge, innovation, and technological advancement while simultaneously promoting particular understandings of AI to the public.

The third stage examined social practice. At this level, the researchers interpreted the broader ideological meanings embedded in the discourse by relating the textual findings to the ongoing digital transformation of Indonesian higher education, global technological competition, and the increasing institutional emphasis on innovation and AI literacy. Throughout the analytical process, recurring linguistic patterns were grouped into thematic categories representing dominant discourses surrounding AI. These categories subsequently became the basis for interpreting the institutional ideologies reflected in the official news texts.

Trustworthiness

To enhance the credibility of the findings, the study employed investigator triangulation through repeated reading and cross-checking of the selected news articles. The analysis was conducted iteratively by comparing linguistic patterns across different universities to identify recurring discursive themes. Furthermore, textual evidence in the form of direct excerpts from the news articles was used to support each analytical interpretation, thereby ensuring transparency and analytical consistency.

FINDINGS

AI as Educational Innovation

Across the selected university news articles, artificial intelligence is consistently constructed as an educational innovation capable of transforming learning, research, and academic development. Rather than portraying AI as a disruptive technology, the universities predominantly represent it as an instrument that enhances educational quality and institutional progress. This representation is realized through recurrent lexical choices such as *innovation*, *digital transformation*, *smart learning*, *research development*, *technology*, *future*, and *education*.

For example, ITB's official news on *Smart Learning* presents AI as an educational partner that supports future learning environments. Similarly, Universitas Airlangga introduces AI through training activities designed to improve students' technological competence, while Universitas Indonesia highlights AI research as an important academic contribution to solving social problems such as hate speech detection. These textual choices consistently associate AI with positive educational outcomes rather than technological risks.

At the textual level, positive evaluative vocabulary dominates the discourse. Verbs such as *develop*, *improve*, *strengthen*, *advance*, and *support* repeatedly position AI as an enabling technology. Likewise, nouns including *innovation*, *research*, *collaboration*, and *development* contribute to constructing AI as an integral component of contemporary higher education. From the perspective of discursive practice, these news texts function as institutional communication intended to demonstrate universities' readiness to embrace digital transformation. Rather than merely reporting campus activities, the news articles simultaneously promote institutional achievements and reinforce the universities' commitment to technological advancement (Sudding, et.al., 2025).

At the level of social practice, this discourse reflects Indonesia's broader agenda of educational digitalization and global technological competition. AI is therefore discursively constructed not merely as a technological tool but as a symbol of educational modernization and institutional adaptation to the demands of the digital era.

AI as Institutional Excellence

The analysis reveals that artificial intelligence is also constructed as a symbol of institutional excellence and academic prestige. Across the selected news articles, universities consistently present AI-related activities as indicators of research capability, innovation capacity, and institutional competitiveness. Rather than merely informing readers about academic events, the news discourse positions universities as leading institutions actively shaping Indonesia's digital future (Paul, 2004).

This representation is reflected through expressions emphasizing research collaboration, international partnerships, technological innovation, and academic leadership. Universitas Indonesia highlights collaborative AI research with industry partners, while Universitas Gadjah Mada introduces the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence Society as evidence of institutional readiness to respond to future technological developments. Similarly, Institut Teknologi Bandung presents AI discussions through expert-led academic forums that reinforce its image as a leading science and technology institution.

At the textual level, the repeated use of lexical items such as *leading*, *research*, *innovation*, *collaboration*, *technology*, *development*, and *expert* contributes to constructing institutional authority. The frequent reference to professors, researchers, industry partners, and academic communities further strengthens the legitimacy of universities as producers of scientific knowledge.

Within Fairclough's discursive practice dimension, these news texts function as institutional branding. They communicate not only educational information but also organizational identity, demonstrating universities' commitment to scientific excellence and technological advancement. At the social practice level, the discourse reflects increasing competition among higher education institutions to position themselves as key contributors to national digital transformation and global academic competitiveness.

AI as Future Competence

Another dominant discourse identified across the corpus is the representation of artificial intelligence as an essential competence for the future. Rather than depicting AI solely as an emerging technology, the selected universities consistently frame AI literacy as a necessary skill that students, lecturers, and researchers must acquire to remain relevant in an increasingly digital society.

The discourse emphasizes training programs, seminars, workshops, curriculum development, and student organizations dedicated to AI learning. Universitas Airlangga introduces AI workshops aimed at equipping students with practical computational skills, while ITB discusses AI within the context of future education and technological transformation. Similarly, UGM highlights the importance of preparing young generations to engage critically with AI development through interdisciplinary collaboration.

Textually, this discourse is characterized by future-oriented expressions such as *future*, *digital era*, *competence*, *skills*, *preparation*, *adaptation*, and *transformation*. Modal expressions encouraging readiness and continuous learning further reinforce the idea that AI competence is no longer optional but increasingly necessary within higher education.

From the perspective of discursive practice, universities construct themselves as facilitators responsible for preparing graduates capable of responding to technological change. At the

broader social practice level, this discourse aligns with Indonesia's aspiration to develop globally competitive human resources capable of participating in the digital economy and Industry 4.0.

AI as Responsible and Collaborative Technology

Although artificial intelligence is consistently represented positively, the discourse simultaneously constructs AI as a technology requiring responsible and ethical utilization. Rather than promoting unrestricted technological adoption, the selected universities frequently emphasize the importance of critical thinking, ethical awareness, human supervision, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Several news articles discuss AI as a supporting technology designed to assist human decision-making instead of replacing human expertise. Ethical considerations, responsible innovation, and collaborative research frequently accompany discussions concerning AI implementation. This representation indicates that universities seek to balance technological optimism with social responsibility.

The textual analysis demonstrates the use of evaluative expressions associated with responsibility, ethics, collaboration, and sustainability. Lexical choices including *responsible*, *ethical*, *collaborative*, *support*, *human-centered*, and *beneficial* construct AI as a technology that should complement rather than dominate educational processes.

At the level of discursive practice, this discourse legitimizes universities as responsible institutions capable of guiding society through technological transformation. Within Fairclough's social practice dimension, the discourse reflects broader global concerns regarding AI governance, ethical regulation, and sustainable technological development. Consequently, Indonesian universities position themselves not only as adopters of AI but also as institutions responsible for promoting its ethical and socially beneficial application.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings demonstrate that artificial intelligence is not represented as a neutral technological phenomenon within Indonesian universities' official news. Instead, AI is strategically constructed through institutional discourse that reflects universities' aspirations, organizational identities, and broader educational ideologies. Across the selected texts, AI is consistently associated with innovation, institutional excellence, future competence, and responsible technological development. These recurring representations indicate that official university news functions not only as an informational medium but also as a discursive instrument through which universities shape public understanding of AI (Fairclough, 2010).

The first dominant discourse positions AI as educational innovation. This finding supports Fairclough's (1995) argument that discourse actively constructs rather than merely reflects social reality. The repeated use of lexical items such as *innovation*, *digital transformation*, *technology*, *research*, and *future* demonstrates how universities normalize AI as an inevitable component of educational development. Through these linguistic choices, AI is represented as a catalyst for improving teaching, research, and institutional performance (Sudding, et.al., 2026). Consequently, the discourse encourages audiences to perceive technological advancement as an essential characteristic of contemporary higher education.

This representation is closely connected to the broader discourse of digital transformation currently promoted within higher education worldwide. Similar to previous studies that identify

universities as active agents of technological modernization, the present findings suggest that institutional communication contributes significantly to legitimizing AI adoption. However, unlike previous research that primarily investigates AI implementation from pedagogical or technological perspectives, this study reveals that universities also construct AI symbolically through language. The discourse therefore functions as a mechanism for establishing AI as an accepted educational norm before its practical implementation becomes fully embedded across institutional practices.

The second discourse constructs AI as institutional excellence. Rather than emphasizing technology alone, the selected universities consistently associate AI with research productivity, academic leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, and international partnerships. This representation indicates that AI functions as a symbolic resource through which universities communicate institutional prestige. Official news therefore performs an important branding function by presenting universities as innovative institutions capable of responding to rapid technological change (Sudding, et.al., 2025).

From Fairclough's perspective, this finding illustrates the relationship between discourse and institutional power. Universities produce texts that simultaneously report academic activities and reinforce their organizational legitimacy. By highlighting AI-related achievements, collaborations, and expert involvement, universities position themselves as authoritative producers of knowledge within Indonesia's higher education landscape. The discourse consequently contributes to strengthening institutional credibility while simultaneously enhancing public trust.

The third discourse represents AI as future competence. The selected news articles repeatedly emphasize the importance of preparing students, lecturers, researchers, and academic communities for future technological challenges. Expressions such as *future skills*, *digital competence*, *AI literacy*, and *technological readiness* indicate that universities perceive AI not simply as a technological innovation but as a fundamental educational competence. This representation extends beyond technical knowledge by promoting continuous learning, adaptability, and interdisciplinary collaboration as essential attributes for future graduates.

The construction of AI as future competence reflects broader educational policies emphasizing human resource development in the digital era. Universities therefore position themselves as institutions responsible for producing graduates capable of participating in increasingly technology-driven societies. This discourse reinforces the institutional role of higher education in supporting national competitiveness while simultaneously responding to global transformations associated with Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0.

The final discourse constructs AI as responsible and collaborative technology. Interestingly, none of the selected universities portrays AI as a replacement for human intelligence. Instead, AI is consistently represented as a complementary technology that supports human creativity, academic productivity, research development, and educational innovation. Ethical responsibility, critical thinking, collaboration, and human supervision frequently accompany discussions concerning AI implementation.

This finding demonstrates that universities seek to balance technological optimism with ethical considerations. Rather than adopting an exclusively techno-centric perspective, institutional discourse promotes responsible AI utilization aligned with educational values. Such representation reflects global concerns regarding AI governance, academic integrity, and ethical

technology use while simultaneously positioning universities as responsible institutions capable of guiding society through digital transformation (Olga, 2019).

Collectively, these four discourses reveal that official university news functions as an ideological space where AI is normalized, legitimized, and institutionalized. Through repeated linguistic patterns and positive evaluative language, universities construct AI as an indispensable element of educational modernization. The discourse not only informs readers about institutional activities but also shapes expectations regarding the future direction of Indonesian higher education.

The present study contributes to discourse studies by demonstrating that institutional communication plays an active role in constructing technological meaning. Rather than treating AI as an external technological development, universities integrate AI into narratives concerning innovation, excellence, competence, and responsibility (Wayne, et.al., 2019). Consequently, discourse becomes a strategic mechanism through which higher education institutions negotiate their identities within an increasingly competitive and digital academic environment.

These findings also extend previous Critical Discourse Analysis research by highlighting the significance of official university news as an important site of institutional meaning-making. While earlier studies frequently examine political speeches, policy documents, or media reports, the present study illustrates that university news constitutes a distinctive institutional genre that deserves greater scholarly attention. As universities continue expanding AI-related initiatives, future discourse studies may compare institutional narratives across countries, educational systems, or digital communication platforms to further understand how higher education constructs the social meaning of artificial intelligence.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how artificial intelligence is discursively constructed in official news published by selected Indonesian universities using Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis framework. By analyzing institutional news texts from Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Universitas Airlangga, and Universitas Negeri Makassar, the study revealed that AI is represented through four dominant discourses: AI as educational innovation, AI as institutional excellence, AI as future competence, and AI as responsible and collaborative technology. These representations demonstrate that official university news functions not merely as a channel for disseminating information but also as a strategic form of institutional discourse that shapes public understanding of emerging technologies.

The findings indicate that Indonesian universities consistently employ positive lexical choices, evaluative language, and future-oriented expressions to construct AI as an essential component of higher education transformation. Rather than portraying AI as a disruptive or threatening technology, the institutional discourse emphasizes its potential to enhance research, teaching, learning, innovation, and academic collaboration. Such representations contribute to normalizing AI within higher education and encourage stakeholders to perceive technological advancement as both desirable and necessary.

From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, these findings confirm that language is never neutral. The official news texts do not simply describe AI-related activities; they actively construct institutional identities and legitimize particular perspectives regarding technological

development. Through discourse, universities position themselves as innovative, future-oriented, and globally competitive institutions capable of responding to rapid technological change. Consequently, AI becomes a symbolic resource through which universities communicate their academic credibility, institutional aspirations, and commitment to digital transformation.

This study contributes theoretically by extending the application of Critical Discourse Analysis to the field of institutional communication in higher education. While previous studies have predominantly explored AI from technological, pedagogical, or ethical perspectives, the present study demonstrates that AI should also be understood as a discursive phenomenon constructed through institutional language. The findings therefore enrich discourse studies by illustrating how official university news serves as an important site where meanings surrounding AI are produced, negotiated, and legitimized.

Practically, the findings suggest that universities should recognize the influence of institutional communication in shaping public perceptions of AI. As official news continues to function as a bridge between universities and society, institutions are encouraged to communicate AI-related initiatives in ways that not only promote innovation but also emphasize ethical responsibility, critical thinking, inclusiveness, and human-centered technological development. Such balanced communication is essential to foster public trust and responsible AI adoption within higher education.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. This study analyzed a relatively small corpus of official news articles from selected Indonesian universities. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalized to all higher education institutions or other forms of institutional communication. Future research may expand the dataset by including a larger number of universities, private higher education institutions, government policy documents, social media content, or international university websites. Comparative studies across countries or longitudinal analyses examining the evolution of AI discourse over time would also provide valuable insights into how institutional narratives surrounding artificial intelligence continue to develop in response to technological and educational change.

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