AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE MOVIE
BAD BOYS II

THESIS

Submitted for Fulfill a Partial requirement S1 Degree in the Department of English Faculty of Humanities Universitas Bung Hatta

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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITAS BUNG HATTA

2025

UNIVERSITAS BUNG HATTA

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Dinyatakan lulus setelah dipertahankan di depan Tim Penguji

Program Studi Sastra Inggris Fakultas Ilmu Budaya

Universitas Bung Hatta

Judul Skripsi	:	AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE MOVIE *BAD BOYS II*.
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Padang, 24 April 2025

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify the originality of this thesis I submitted to fulfill a requirement for an S1 degree in the English Department Faculty of Humanities Universitas Bung Hatta. This thesis is entirely mine and there are no works or opinions written or published by other people except as references or quotations by following the usual scientific writing procedures.

Padang, 24 April 2025

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AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE MOVIE BAD BOYS II

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the types of figurative language and the functions in the use of figurative language in the movie Bad Boys II. This study uses Perrine's theory to analyze the types and functions of figurative language in the Bad Boys II movie and uses a descriptive qualitative method with observation techniques based on Bogdan. The findings indicate that the movie employs several types of figurative language, such as hyperbole, metaphor, irony, understatement, symbolism, and metonymy. The functions of the figurative language are also found in Imaginative Pleasure, Emotional Intensity, and Means of Concentration. The characters use figurative language in various functions. Metaphor appears in multiple functions, including means of concentration and emotional intensity. Hyperbole also serves multiple functions, particularly imaginative pleasure and emotional intensity. Understatement is used to emphasize key ideas, contributing to means of concentration. Irony functions both as imaginative pleasure and emotional intensity. Meanwhile, metonymy and symbolism are primarily used to evoke emotional intensity.

Keywords: figurative language, Bad Boys II, hyperbole, emotional intensity

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, all praise and gratitude to the presence of Allah SWT for all the grace, guidance, strength that has been given to the author so that the author can complete this thesis as one of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor of Humanities degree.

With great respect and gratitude, the author would like to express and also express his deepest appreciation to all those who have provided support, guidance and assistance during the process of preparing the thesis entitled "*AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE MOVIE BAD BOYS II*". My gratitude goes to:

1. Prof. Dr. Elfiondri. S.S., M.Hum. as the writer's supervisor while writing the thesis, thank you for your guidance, support, motivation, all knowledge and patience in guiding the author during the thesis preparation process. Your guidance and direction are very valuable in helping me complete this research as well as possible.

2. Diana Chitra Hasan, S.Pd., M.Hum., M.Ed., Ph.D. As the examining lecturer during the proposal seminar, thank you very much for the criticism, suggestions and input that were very constructive in my thesis trial. Thank you for providing knowledge and insight during the writer's lecture period.

3. Dr. Yusrita Yanti, S.S., M.Hum. As the examining lecturer for the proposal seminar, the writer would like to thank you for the motivation, advice, input, and criticism you gave during the thesis trial, which improved my thesis.

4. My beloved parents

   a. Othman Bin Ahmad, My role model, my life reflection in the future I will choose a future husband exactly like you, thank you for all the sacrifices and sincere love that you gave us, without you we might not have felt education in college, father has given the best for his child, tirelessly giving full support and attention to me so that I was able to complete my studies and earn a bachelor's degree. Thank you father,

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this is all thanks to your hard work, I dedicate this degree to you

b. The key to heaven is Mrs. Mira, mother, thank you for being a place for my complaints, thank you for taking the time to guide me through my thesis, your prayers penetrate the seventh heaven so that I can walk and be confident to complete one of the parts that everyone is waiting for. If it were not for your encouragement, this thesis would not have been created. I dedicate this thesis and degree to you.

5. To someone whose presence is no less important, Leonardo Osman, S.Hum, thank you for being a part of my life journey, who knows the joys and sorrows of completing this thesis, who always takes the time to help me, accompany me, entertain me and give me the spirit to continue to be strong and never give up, there are many dynamics of life and dreams that I want to build and go through with you, thank you for being a support in my life.

6. I Also Thank to all parties involved in writing this thesis, thank you for providing assistance and support.

This thesis is far from perfect and there are still many mistakes, therefore constructive criticism and suggestions are needed by the author to make this research perfect. Finally, I hope that this thesis can provide benefits for readers and the academic world.

Padang, March 20, 2025

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Research

Humans use language in order to communicate, so language and communication are essential to one another as language allows people to interact more with others to communicate their thoughts or feelings. Language plays a significant role in daily communication, serving as the cornerstone of human interaction and understanding. When people possess the right words to employ, they can effectively communicate and comprehend one another, fostering meaningful connections and exchanges of ideas. In addition, people use language to communicate to connect with one another in society and to understand the meanings of the speaker and addressee. When speaking or writing, both the speaker and the addressee negotiate meaning. As a result, there is a link between what is stated and how the speaker attempts to transmit the message or information. Language is adaptable and promotes creative expression. Different people may communicate the same notion in various ways. Many people use figurative language to express or accentuate meaning. Figurative language is a user's understanding of language that alters the meaning or pattern of conventional sentences to achieve a specific meaning or effect.

Johnson and Arp (2017) in *Perrine"s Literature, Structure, Sound and Sense* underline that figurative language can be defined as language that uses figures of speech to convey meanings that are richer, more complex, and cannot be understood by literal interpretation as one broader understanding is required to uncover the true meaning (Johnson & Arp, 2017). Regarding this, Abrams (2015) adds that figurative language is a striking deviation from what language users understand as the standard meaning of words, or the standard sequence of words, in order to achieve some

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special meaning or effect. This means that figurative language is a way of expressing oneself or a word unusually or that does not use a strict or realistic meaning of the word. Generally, in comparison and exaggeration, it is usually used to add creative development to written or spoken language or to explain complex ideas (Abrams, 2015).

Concerning figurative language, the movie remains a strong component for expressing messages, emotions, and various cultural stories which figurative language embodies as a part of communication. In this case, movies and communication have an interesting bond, so closely related and connected. The movie can generate significant feelings from many characters through dialogue, plot, and communication. Regarding this, an American movie entitled *Bad Boy II* shows how figurative language can make a movie seem unique. Figurative language is like a magic tool that helps characters to speak in ways that are more than just simple words. Instead of just saying things directly, the characters use special kinds of language that help viewers feel deeper emotions and understand complex ideas. In the movie, the characters do not just talk normally, instead, the characters use words that paint pictures of one"s minds. For example, when they talk about loss or hope, they might use comparisons or special phrases that make people feel exactly what they are feeling. It is like they are using words as colors to create a beautiful and powerful story. The use of figurative language, in this case, helps viewers to understand the characters' feelings in a way that plain, simple talking cannot.

In addition, the movie uses different kinds of figurative language. Sometimes, the characters speak using metaphors, which are like word pictures that compare two different things to help explain a feeling or an idea. Other times, they use symbols as

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words that stand for something bigger than themselves. This makes the conversations in the movie feel rich and deep, almost like a poem mixed into a movie. When the characters talk about their culture, their pain, or their hopes, they do it in a way that feels both real and magical. The language helps viewers see beyond just the surface of the story. It is like the words themselves are telling a story alongside the actors and the plot. This means that every conversation becomes more than just characters talking, it becomes a way of sharing important feelings and experiences. Therefore, figurative language plays an important role in the movie, adding a layer of poetic realism that complements its visual majesty. Through metaphors and symbols, the movie communicates the complexities of grief, the struggle for identity, and the hope for a better future.

Furthermore, the analysis of figurative language in *Bad Boy II* can make a significant contribution to interdisciplinary studies between linguistics, and movie studies. A multimodal analysis of figurative language in movies opens up new perspectives in understanding the interaction between text, image, and sound. As such, this research is not only relevant to linguistic and literary academics but also to movie buffs and moviemakers interested in the use of language as a powerful artistic tool.

Based on the previous statement, it is clear that this research is interesting to examine the figurative language style used in movies. Figurative language is not widely known, and movie audiences usually know less about figurative language, movies are also closely related to culture so it is suspected that they use a lot of figurative language. Rich, constantly changing dialogue is a hallmark of American action-comedy films. The main characters use language that is expressive, sometimes hyperbolic, and full of idioms, metaphors, and other indirect language styles. Thus,
the analysis of this movie is interesting because it can show how figurative language

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can be used in everyday situations in dramatic or even extreme situations. Therefore, the writer decided to conduct the study entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in the Movie *Bad Boy II*"

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background, the research questions of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the types of figurative language used by the characters found in the movie *Bad Boy II*?

2. What are the functions of figurative language employed by the characters in the movie *Bad Boy II*?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

Based on the research questions formulated above, the purposes of this research are formulated as follows:

1. To find out the types of figurative language used in the movie *Bad Boy II*

2. To find out the functions of figurative language employed in *Bad Boy II*

1.4 Limitation of the Research

Through this study, the writer focuses on analyzing the types of figurative language by referring to Laurence Perrine's theory of figurative language, ex. Simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, hyperbole, and others. The focus of this research is on analyzing types of directive speech acts uttered by the characters in *Bad Boys II* movie.

In a semantics kind of study, there are so many kinds of interesting topics to be analyzed and discussed. However, in this research, the writer just focuses on the figurative language that is found by analyzing the conversation and dialogue employed by the characters that occur in *Bad Boy II* movie by using the theory proposed by Perrine.

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1.5   Significance of the Research

This study is expected to provide future researchers with a reference or understanding of how to conduct research by applying Perrine‟s (1969) theory of figurative language, especially in analyzing media-based objects such as movies or films.

This study is also expected to help students and lecturers, especially the Faculty of Humanity of Universitas Bung Hatta. The results of this study can also be used as teaching materials to support the teacher's teaching process and provide examples of figurative language theory to students for future classes.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Review of Related Literature

In this chapter, the writer explains about such related resources driven by the experts about the subjects. For readers to properly comprehend the theories and concepts, it is significant that these concepts be discussed and explained.

2.1.1. Semantics

Semantics is the study of meanings. Semantics studies the origins of symbols or signals, their relationships with one another, and their impact on individuals and society. As a result, semantics encompasses word formation, development, and alteration. Semantics is derived from the Greek word *semantikos*, which means "sign". Semantics is the study and refinement of meanings obtained from words; semantics is the study of meaning at the word, phrase, and sentence levels. It's a subfield of linguistics. The study of meaning in semantics refers to what sentences and other linguistic objects are expressed. Semantics is the scientific study of the meaning of words. The word "semantics" finally applies as the name of the doctrine of meaning, especially linguistic meaning. According to Griffiths (2006), semantics is the study of the meaning of words, and the meaning of sentences, abstracted from the context of use, is a descriptive subject. Griffiths (2006) further states that semantics is the study of a "toolkit" for meaning: the knowledge that is encoded in language vocabulary and in its patterns to construct more complex meanings, down to the level of sentence meaning. Semantics is the study of meaning, which is at the heart of linguistics' quest to understand the nature of language and the human capacity for language. The point is that the expression of meaning is at the heart of all language. Everything in language, be it words, grammatical constructions, and intonation

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patterns, conspires to realize this goal in the fullest, richest, and most subtle way possible. To understand how a particular language works, we need to understand how its individual design works to fulfil its function as a complex device for communicating meaning. Semantics is also crucial for the purpose of describing and accounting for linguistic competence, that is, the knowledge that people must have in order to speak and understand a language. Semantic competence is an essential part of linguistic competence as a whole (Griffiths, 2006).

This semantic research not only helps in interpreting messages objectively, but also enriches the understanding of how language becomes a reflection of people's shared values, beliefs and experiences. Sapir (1929) reinforces this idea by stating that "language is a symbolic guide to culture". To illustrate, semantic analyses allow us to explore how language is not only a means of communication, but also a tool to portray dynamics of power, identity and resistance within complex social structures (Fairclough, 1989).

By digging deeper, we can grasp how implicit and connotative meanings in language can change our perceptions and deepen our understanding of the world around us. This shows how important the semantic approach is in revealing the complexity of language in various contexts, both in literature and everyday interactions (Wittgenstein, 1953).

2.1.2. Figurative Language

According to Perrine (1969), figurative language offers another way of adding extra dimensions to language. It can be defined that figurative language can do more than literal language. Using figurative language by the speaker can give the hearer the hidden or invisible meaning. Also, figurative language can explain an idea, and makes writing   more   vivid   and   rich   (Perrine,   1969).

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Figurative language is the intersection of beauty of words and depth of meaning. Lakoff & Johson (1980) introduces the view that metaphors are not just simple comparisons, but are mental constructs that reflect the way we understand the world. For example, when we say someone is "stuck in a rut", we are not only describing a physical state, but also activating our perception of life as a journey that can be hampered by habit (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Aristoteles (2012) in his work on rhetoric, highlights the use of figurative language as a persuasive tool capable of wooing the emotions and convincing the mind with the power of words that differ from their literal meaning (Aristoteles, 2012). Instead, Max Black (1962) proposed the idea of metaphor as a "hidden comparison" that not only conveys similarities between two things, but also reveals nuances and complexities in human experience (Black, 1962).

In the context of modern literature, Laurence Perrine (1969) emphasizes the importance of figurative languages such as simile, metaphor, and personification in enriching the reading experience. For example, in a poem, similes such as "the sun set like a fireball" not only visualize the beauty of nature but also bring out dramatic and emotional nuances. The use of connectives such as "thus", "hence", and "thus" help to link these ideas seamlessly, creating a strong flow of thought and deepening our understanding of the beauty and complexity of literature (Perrine, 1969).

Based on the preceding statements, figurative language is understood as the non-literal use of language to convey abstract concepts more concretely through comparison with physical objects or experiences, often through metaphor as a way to understand and communicate human experience in a more concrete form (as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson), as well as a powerful rhetorical tool to influence listeners' feelings or beliefs more persuasively than literal language (Aristotle), and as

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an important element in literature to create a more profound aesthetic or rhetorical effect (by Laurence Perrine's approach).

2.2   Theoretical Framework

In this study, to analyze the types of figurative language, the writer used the theory proposed by Perrine. To find out the function used, the writer also uses Perrine's theory.

2.2.1   Types of Figurative Language

Perrine (1969) identifies nine types of figurative language, each with its own characteristics, which are used depending on how the speaker wants to convey his or her message. These types include personification, metaphor, overstatement, understatement, irony, paradox, metonymy, symbolism, and allegory.

2.2.1.1   Personification

Personification is a concept in which an inanimate object is described as doing something like a human, despite not having life. Personification is a form of figurative language that describes lifeless objects as if they were performing activities that humans commonly do, meaning that personification is a figure of speech in which human attributes are given to an animal, an object, or a concept (Perrine, 1969). This shows that personification occurs when speakers describe non-living objects as if they were performing actions that humans normally do. An example of personification as underlined by Johnson (2017) in *Perrine''s Literature, Structure, Sound and Sense*:

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,

Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind; 15

Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,

(Johnson & Arp, 2017, p. 771)

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From the example above, it describes autumn as a harvester "sitting careless on a granary floor" or "on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep", which personifies a season. Personifications differ in the degree to which they ask the reader actually to visualize the literal term in human form. In the example above, readers are asked to make a complete identification of autumn with a human being.

2.2.1.2   Metaphor

Metaphors compare two different things indirectly, expressing meaning without stating it directly, meaning that metaphor is a figure of speech in which an implicit comparison is made between two things essentially unlike. Perrine (1969) explains that metaphor is a form of figurative language in which the actual meaning is not stated directly, but rather conveyed through an implied comparison (Perrine, 1969). Johnson (2017) adds that metaphor may take one of four forms: (1) that in which the literal term and the figurative term are both named; (2) that in which the literal term is named and the figurative term implied; (3) that in which the literal term is implied and the figurative term named; (4) that in which both the literal and the figurative terms are implied (Johnson & Arp, 2017):

*"**Sorrow** is my own **yard** where the new grass flames as it has flamed…"*

(Johnson & Arp, 2017, p. 763)

From the example above, the literal term is "sorrow" and the figurative term is "yard."

2.2.1.3   Hyperbole

Overstatement or hyperbole is a way of speaking that embellishes expression by exaggeration, often by exploiting or developing an idea, meaning that hyperbole is a figure of speech in which exaggeration is used in the service of truth (Perrine, 1969). Johnson (2017) adds that overstatement, or hyperbole, is simply exaggeration, but

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exaggeration in the service of truth. When someone says "I"m starved!" or "You could have knocked me over with a feather!" or "I"ll die if I don"t pass this course!" it is not expected to be taken literally; someone is just merely adding emphasis to what it really means. (And if you say, "There were literally millions of people at the beach!" you are merely piling one overstatement on top of another, for you really mean, "There were figuratively millions of people at the beach," or, literally, "The beach was very crowded.") (Johnson & Arp, 2017). To give a clear example of overstatement or hyperbole, Johnson (2017) in *Perrine"s Literature, Structure, Sound and Sense* exemplifies:

"He clasps the crag with crooked hands;

Close to the sun in lonely lands…"

(Johnson & Arp, 2017, p. 708)

From the example above, the texts literally says what appears to be literally true, though everybody knows from the study of astronomy that it is not.

2.2.1.4   Understatement

Understatement, or saying less than one means, may exist in what one says or merely in how one says it. Understatement is the use of verbs to deliberately downgrade or reduce the importance of a situation, understatement is often used to convey a situation by not showing its true intensity, creating an ironic effect, meaning that understatement is a figure of speech that consists of saying less than one means, or of saying what one means with less force than the occasion warrants (Johnson & Arp, 2017; Perrine, 1969). Johnson (2017) exemplifies if, for instance, upon sitting down to a loaded dinner plate, someone says:

"This looks like a nice snack,"

(Johnson & Arp, 2017, p. 816)

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It means that he/she is actually stating less than the truth; but if he/she says, with the humorist Artemus Ward, that a man who holds his hand for half an hour in a lighted fire will experience "a sensation of excessive and disagreeable warmth," it means that he/she is stating what is literally true but with a good deal less force than the situation warrants.

2.2.1.5 Irony

Irony can be defined as a situation or a use of language involving some kind of incongruity or discrepancy, irony has meanings that extend beyond its use merely as a figure of speech. According to Perrine (1969), Irony refers to the use of spoken or written language to convey a meaning contrary to what is intended. Irony highlights situations where the reality is different from the impression being presented. Irony arises when sentences or words have contradictory or contrasting meanings (Perrine, 1969). Johnson (2017) adds that no matter how broad or obvious the irony, several people in any large audience always will misunderstand. Artemus Ward used to protect himself against these people by writing at the bottom of his newspaper column, "This is writ ironical." But irony is most delightful and most effective when it is subtlest. It sets up a special understanding between writer and reader that may add either grace or force. If irony is too obvious, it sometimes seems merely crude. But if effectively used, like all figurative language, it is capable of adding extra dimensions to meaning (Johnson & Arp, 2017).

2.2.1.6 Paradox

Paradox can be defined as a statement or situation containing contradictory or incompatible elements. Perrine (1969) states that a paradox is a statement that appears to contradict existing expectations or opinions, often appearing contradictory or strange but containing hidden truths. Perrine (1969) describes a

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paradox as a statement that may at first appear to make no logical sense, but can be interpreted in a way that makes sense in a particular context, meaning that a paradox is an apparent contradiction that is nevertheless somehow true. It may be either a situation or a statement (Perrine, 1969). To give a clear example:

"Damn with faint praise."

(Johnson & Arp, 2017, p. 814)

From the example above, it can be inferred that when we understand all the conditions and circumstances involved in a paradox, we find that what at first seemed impossible is entirely plausible and not strange at all. However, the example above implies for how can a man damn by praising which remains a statement appears to be a paradox.

2.2.1.7   Metonymy

Perrine, (1969) states that metonymy is a renaming, where one word is used to refer to something else that is closely related. Meaning that metonymy is the use of something closely related to the thing actually meant (Perrine, 1969). Johnson (2017) adds that metonymy is a figure of speech in which some significant aspect or detail of an experience is used to represent the whole experience (Johnson & Arp, 2017). To give a clear example:

*Half in appeal, but half **as if to keep the life from spilling**.*

Then the boy saw all—

Since he was old enough to know, big boy

Doing a man"s work, though a child at heart—

(Johnson & Arp, 2017, p. 835)

The example above describes an injured boy holding up his cut hand "as if to keep / The life from spilling," for literally he means to keep the blood from spilling.

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In each case, however, the example above gains in compactness, vividness, or meaning. The example above tells us both that the boy"s hand is bleeding and that his life is in danger.

2.2.1.8 Symbolism

According to Perrine (1969), a symbol may be defined as something that means more than what it is. Sometimes, a symbol is difficult to distinguish, because a symbol means what it is and something more too. For example, Robert Frost"s poem *The Road Not Taken*, concerns a choice made between two roads by a person out walking in the woods. His choice of a road is a symbol for any choice in life. (Perrine, 1969). To make it clear, Johnson (2017) adds that most names are simply labels. A name, for instance, does not tell much about the person to whom it is attached, except possibly the individual"s nationality or, in the case of first names, the person"s gender. In a story, however, authors may choose names for their characters that not only label them but also suggest something about them. In "A Worn Path," for instance, the name "Phoenix" has several meanings that are relevant to Welty"s character. In Egyptian mythology, a phoenix was a bird that consumed itself by fire after five hundred years but then rose from its ashes. It was also employed as a Christian symbol of death and resurrection in the art and architecture of the medieval period (Johnson & Arp, 2017).

2.2.1.9 Allegory

Allegory operates similarly to an extended metaphor, where the narrative or vivid description is intended to be an interesting or entertaining independent work. However, the main concern in allegory is often focused on the abstract ideas represented by the literary elements in the work. Perrine (1969) explains that the meaning of allegory is often more orientated towards hiding meaning rather than

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