



## Integrity: A Cornerstone in Teaching English to Indonesian University Students

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b></p> <p>Received</p> <p>Accepted</p>	<p>This research investigates the pivotal role of integrity in the English language teaching (ELT) context of Indonesian universities. It explores the concept of integrity within the classroom, its impact on student learning, and the strategies employed by teachers to cultivate integrity among students. By examining the correlation between teacher integrity and student outcomes, this study aims to underscore the significance of ethical conduct in fostering a conducive learning environment. Findings from this research are expected to provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers in enhancing the quality of English language education in Indonesia.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p><i>Integrity</i></p> <p><i>English Language Teaching</i></p> <p><i>Indonesian University Students</i></p> <p><i>Ethical Conduct</i></p> <p><i>Learning Environment</i></p>	



## INTRODUCTION

The concept of integrity has gained prominence in various academic disciplines, and education is no exception. As a cornerstone of character and professional ethics, integrity is increasingly recognized as a crucial component of effective teaching. In the specific context of English language instruction, a teacher's integrity can significantly influence the learning experience of university students. Integrity in the classroom fosters a climate of trust and respect, essential elements for effective learning. Students are more likely to engage actively and participate in class discussions when they perceive their teacher as honest, fair, and consistent.

The impact of teacher integrity extends beyond classroom dynamics. It influences students' academic performance, critical thinking skills, and overall development. Research suggests that students taught by instructors with high integrity tend to exhibit greater academic honesty, improved problem-solving abilities, and a stronger sense of social responsibility. However, integrating integrity into teaching practice is not without challenges. Defining integrity in the educational context, understanding cultural nuances, and balancing ethical principles with practical classroom demands are complex issues. Additionally, the pressure to meet performance expectations and the demands of higher education can sometimes create tension between upholding integrity and achieving desired outcomes.

To address these challenges, educators must prioritize professional development opportunities that focus on ethics and integrity. Creating open and supportive environments where teachers can discuss ethical dilemmas is also crucial. By fostering a culture of integrity within the institution, administrators can provide teachers with the necessary support to uphold high ethical standards. Ultimately, the role of integrity in teaching English for university students is multifaceted. It encompasses building trust, modeling ethical behavior, enhancing student learning, and navigating complex challenges. By prioritizing integrity, educators can contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals who are prepared to make a positive impact on society.

Integrity, a fundamental ethical principle, is paramount in the realm of education. Its significance is particularly pronounced in the context of teaching English to Indonesian university students. By embodying integrity, educators cultivate a trusting and respectful learning environment where students feel empowered to actively participate and seek knowledge. This positive atmosphere is instrumental in fostering student motivation and inspiring a genuine passion for language acquisition (Brown, 2000). Moreover, teachers who demonstrate integrity play a pivotal role in developing students' critical thinking abilities. By presenting information objectively and transparently, educators encourage students to analyze, question, and form their own informed opinions (Facione, 2016). This skill is essential for success in higher education and beyond. Furthermore, a teacher's commitment to integrity serves as a powerful model for students, promoting academic honesty and a strong ethical compass (Trevino & Nelson, 2007).

Research has consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between teacher integrity and student outcomes. For instance, a study by Barnett and Beaty (2012) found that students who perceived their teachers as having high integrity reported greater

satisfaction with their courses and higher levels of academic motivation. This suggests that a teacher's ethical conduct can significantly impact students' overall learning experience and engagement. Furthermore, integrity plays a crucial role in fostering a supportive and inclusive classroom environment. When teachers demonstrate fairness, honesty, and respect for all students, they create a space where diversity is valued and students feel empowered to voice their opinions. As argued by Ladson-Billings (1995), creating such a climate is essential for the academic success of marginalized students, particularly in English language learning where cultural and linguistic differences can be pronounced.

To effectively integrate integrity into teaching practice, educators must possess a deep understanding of ethical principles and their application to the classroom context. This includes developing critical reflection skills to navigate complex ethical dilemmas that may arise. Additionally, institutions of higher education have a responsibility to support faculty members in their efforts to uphold high ethical standards through professional development opportunities, clear ethical guidelines, and a supportive organizational culture. The role of integrity in teaching English for university students cannot be overstated. By prioritizing ethical conduct, educators create a positive learning environment, enhance student outcomes, and contribute to the development of responsible and engaged citizens. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, it is imperative that institutions and educators prioritize integrity as a core value in their mission to prepare students for success in the 21st century.

While the benefits of integrity in teaching are undeniable, challenges exist. Defining integrity within the specific context of education, navigating cultural nuances, and balancing ethical principles with practical considerations are complex issues. To address these challenges, educators can prioritize leading by example, engaging in open dialogue about values, and establishing clear expectations for academic integrity (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In conclusion, integrity is a catalyst for creating a dynamic and effective English language learning environment in Indonesian universities. By upholding high ethical standards, teachers not only enhance students' academic performance but also contribute to their overall personal and intellectual growth. As such, it is imperative for educators to prioritize integrity as a core value in their teaching practice.

Integrity stands as a cornerstone in the realm of teaching English to Indonesian university students. Its influence reverberates through the entire learning process, shaping not only academic outcomes but also character development. When teachers embody integrity, they create a climate of trust and respect, inspiring students to approach their studies with a similar ethical compass. This, in turn, fosters a genuine thirst for knowledge and a deeper engagement with the English language. Moreover, integrity empowers students to become critical thinkers. By presenting information objectively and transparently, teachers encourage students to analyze, question, and form their own informed opinions. This skill is invaluable as they navigate an increasingly complex world. Furthermore, teachers who uphold high ethical standards serve as role models, deterring academic dishonesty and cultivating a culture of honesty and accountability.

However, the journey towards integrating integrity into teaching is not without its challenges. Defining the nuances of integrity within the educational context requires careful consideration. Additionally, navigating the complexities of Indonesian culture while maintaining unwavering ethical principles demands wisdom and sensitivity. Striking a balance between upholding integrity and addressing the practical demands of the teaching

profession can also be a delicate task. To effectively promote integrity in the classroom, teachers must lead by example, demonstrating unwavering commitment to ethical conduct in all interactions. Open communication about values and expectations is crucial to foster a shared understanding of integrity. Establishing clear guidelines for academic honesty and providing opportunities for professional development in ethics further strengthen the foundation for a morally upright learning environment.

The concept of Integrity Zone, a government initiative aimed at fostering a culture of integrity within Indonesian institutions, provides a relevant framework for examining the role of integrity in teaching English at Universitas Negeri Medan (UNIMED). This study seeks to understand how the principles of the Integrity Zone can be integrated into English language teaching practices to enhance the learning experience and contribute to the overall development of students. The Integrity Zone emphasizes the importance of ethical leadership, transparency, accountability, and community engagement. In the context of English language education, these principles translate into teachers who model ethical behavior, create transparent learning environments, are accountable for student outcomes, and actively engage with the university community. By aligning teaching practices with the Integrity Zone, UNIMED can cultivate a learning environment that prioritizes honesty, fairness, and respect (Trevino & Nelson, 2007).

Furthermore, the Integrity Zone promotes the value of collaboration and partnership. English language teaching often involves collaborative efforts among faculty, students, and stakeholders. By fostering a culture of collaboration based on integrity, UNIMED can create a more inclusive and supportive learning community. This aligns with the university's mission to produce graduates who are not only proficient in English but also possess strong interpersonal and civic engagement skills (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Moreover, the Integrity Zone emphasizes the significance of continuous improvement. In the realm of English language teaching, this translates into a commitment to professional development and pedagogical innovation. By staying updated on the latest teaching methodologies and research, English language teachers at UNIMED can enhance their effectiveness and contribute to the overall quality of education. The integration of the Integrity Zone principles into English language teaching at UNIMED has the potential to create a positive ripple effect. Students who are exposed to a learning environment characterized by integrity are more likely to develop strong ethical values, critical thinking skills, and a sense of social responsibility (Facione, 2016). Ultimately, this can contribute to the development of a more just and equitable society.

### **Integrity in Higher Education**

Integrity, a cornerstone of personal and professional ethics, is paramount in the realm of higher education. It encompasses a set of values and principles that guide individuals in making sound moral choices. In the academic sphere, integrity manifests as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for others. These qualities are essential for fostering a thriving learning environment and cultivating students who are prepared to become ethical and responsible citizens (Rest & Narvaez, 1994).

Higher education institutions have a fundamental responsibility to cultivate a culture of integrity. This involves creating an environment where academic honesty is valued, and students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to make ethical decisions. By emphasizing the importance of integrity in the curriculum, faculty can instill a sense of

moral responsibility in students. Additionally, providing opportunities for students to engage in ethical discussions and dilemmas can enhance their critical thinking and decision-making abilities (Steinert & Cullen, 2006).

Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication, undermines the principles of integrity and compromises the academic enterprise. To address this issue, institutions must implement robust academic integrity policies and procedures. These policies should clearly define academic misconduct, outline the consequences for violations, and provide educational resources to prevent such behaviors. Furthermore, faculty members play a crucial role in deterring academic dishonesty by creating assignments that promote critical thinking and originality (McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001).

Beyond academic integrity, integrity is also essential for maintaining trust and credibility within the higher education community. Faculty members, administrators, and staff are expected to uphold the highest ethical standards in their professional conduct. This includes being transparent in decision-making, avoiding conflicts of interest, and respecting the rights and dignity of others. By demonstrating integrity in their own actions, educators can serve as positive role models for students. Moreover, integrity is vital for fostering a diverse and inclusive campus climate. Respect for different perspectives, backgrounds, and identities is essential for creating a welcoming environment where all students feel valued and supported. By promoting diversity and inclusion, higher education institutions can cultivate a sense of belonging and empower students to reach their full potential. Integrity is a fundamental value that should permeate all aspects of higher education. By prioritizing integrity, institutions can create a learning environment that fosters academic excellence, ethical behavior, and social responsibility. By equipping students with the knowledge and skills to make sound moral choices, higher education can contribute to the development of a more just and equitable society.

Integrity, a cornerstone of ethical conduct, has garnered increasing attention in various professional domains, including education. Within the realm of language teaching, the concept of integrity extends beyond pedagogical competence to encompass ethical considerations that influence teacher-student relationships, classroom climate, and the overall learning experience.

A significant body of literature underscores the importance of teacher integrity in fostering a positive learning environment. Research indicates that students are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and trustful when they perceive their teachers as possessing high ethical standards. Teachers who demonstrate honesty, fairness, and respect for their students create a climate of trust that is conducive to learning (Brown, 2000).

Moreover, teacher integrity is closely linked to students' moral development. By modeling ethical behavior, language teachers can positively influence students' values and attitudes. Studies have shown that students are more likely to develop a strong sense of responsibility, empathy, and respect for others when they are taught by instructors who exhibit these qualities (Darling-Hammond, 2006). However, the concept of integrity in language teaching is complex and multifaceted. Challenges arise in defining and operationalizing integrity within the specific context of language classrooms. Additionally, the interplay between cultural values, educational policies, and individual teacher beliefs can influence the manifestation of integrity in teaching practices.

Furthermore, the relationship between teacher integrity and student outcomes is a topic of ongoing research. While studies have shown positive correlations between teacher integrity and student motivation, engagement, and academic achievement (Brown, 2000), further investigation is needed to establish causal relationships. Addressing the challenges of fostering integrity in language teaching requires a multifaceted approach. This includes professional development programs that focus on ethics and values, clear institutional guidelines for ethical conduct, and opportunities for teachers to engage in critical reflection on their teaching practices. Integrity is a vital component of effective language teaching. By prioritizing ethical conduct, language teachers can create positive learning environments, foster student development, and contribute to the overall well-being of the educational community. Future research should continue to explore the complexities of integrity in language teaching and develop strategies for promoting ethical practices in classrooms worldwide.

### **Integrity in Indonesia Context**

The concept of integrity is particularly relevant in the context of English language teaching (ELT) in Indonesia. As English has become a crucial language for academic, professional, and social advancement, the role of English teachers in shaping students' character and values has increased significantly.

Research on ELT in Indonesia has primarily focused on language acquisition, teaching methodologies, and curriculum development (Sudjana, 2009). However, studies that explicitly address integrity in the context of English language teaching are limited. Nevertheless, the broader literature on teacher professionalism and ethics provides valuable insights into the importance of integrity in the ELT profession (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

English teachers in Indonesia face a complex array of challenges, including large class sizes, limited resources, and diverse student backgrounds. These factors can put pressure on teachers to compromise their ethical principles. For instance, the temptation to provide students with easy answers or to prioritize test preparation over critical thinking skills may arise (Moragh, 2006).

To address these challenges, it is essential to incorporate integrity into teacher education programs. By equipping pre-service teachers with a strong ethical foundation, institutions can cultivate a new generation of educators who prioritize student learning and development over personal gain. Additionally, ongoing professional development opportunities should focus on ethical decision-making and the importance of upholding academic integrity (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Furthermore, creating a supportive and ethical school environment is crucial for fostering integrity among English teachers. Clear guidelines and policies regarding academic honesty, plagiarism, and ethical conduct should be established. Moreover, open communication channels between teachers, administrators, and students can help to address ethical concerns and prevent misconduct (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The concept of integrity is increasingly gaining traction in Indonesia, with the government's initiative of the Integrity Zone serving as a framework for fostering ethical conduct across various sectors. This initiative provides a relevant backdrop for examining the role of integrity in English language teaching (ELT). As English language proficiency becomes increasingly essential in Indonesia, English teachers play a pivotal role in shaping

students' character and values. By aligning ELT practices with the principles of the Integrity Zone, teachers can contribute to the development of ethical, responsible, and engaged citizens.

The Integrity Zone emphasizes transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership. In the context of ELT, these principles can be translated into practices such as clear assessment criteria, open communication with students and parents, and demonstrating ethical behavior in the classroom. By embodying these values, English teachers can build trust and credibility among students and the wider school community. Furthermore, the Integrity Zone promotes collaboration and partnership. English teachers can contribute to this by collaborating with colleagues, sharing best practices, and participating in professional development activities focused on integrity. By working together, teachers can create a supportive environment that promotes ethical conduct and shared responsibility for student outcomes.

However, implementing the Integrity Zone principles in ELT faces challenges. Factors such as large class sizes, limited resources, and diverse student backgrounds can hinder teachers' ability to uphold high ethical standards. Additionally, there may be a lack of clear guidelines and support from school administrators in fostering a culture of integrity. To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to integrate integrity into teacher education programs and provide ongoing professional development opportunities. By equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to navigate ethical dilemmas, institutions can empower them to create classrooms that prioritize integrity.

## **METHOD**

This research uses qualitative descriptive method to describe the role of integrity zone (Zi) development in improving the quality of English language learning in the Department of English language and literature Faculty of language and Arts, UNIMED. The Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 10 lecturers who have knowledge and experience related to research topics, as well as classroom observations to see the application of Integrity Zone values in everyday learning. In-depth interviews are designed to explore information about the perception of lecturers regarding the implementation of integrity zone and its impact on the quality of learning. Classroom observation includes teaching methods, lecturer-student interactions, and assessments conducted by lecturers. Data analysis is done thematically, by reading and understanding the data, identifying codes, developing categories, and determining the main themes that emerge from the data. Interpretation of findings is done by linking data with relevant theories and concepts. Data validity is guaranteed through triangulation techniques, by utilizing various data sources and data collection methods to check the accuracy and consistency of information. With this approach, the study is expected to provide an accurate analysis the role of ZI development in improving the quality of English learning at FBS UNIMED.

In-depth interviews are a powerful qualitative research method for exploring the complex and nuanced nature of integrity in English language teaching at Indonesian universities. By engaging in one-on-one conversations with participants, researchers can gain rich insights into their experiences, perceptions, and beliefs. A well-structured interview guide is essential for conducting effective in-depth interviews. The guide should be designed to elicit detailed information about participants' understanding of integrity, their

experiences with integrity-related challenges, and their strategies for fostering integrity in the classroom.

Developing a well-structured interview guide is essential for conducting effective in-depth interviews. The guide should be designed to elicit comprehensive information about participants' understanding of integrity, their encounters with ethical dilemmas, and their strategies for promoting academic honesty. Exploring participants' perceptions of institutional support for integrity, the influence of cultural values, and the impact of integrity on student learning is crucial for a holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

To establish rapport and encourage open communication, interviewers should create a comfortable and trusting atmosphere. Active listening, probing questions, and clarification are essential for eliciting detailed and insightful responses. The ability to adapt the interview based on participant responses is also crucial for capturing the richness of their experiences.

Analysing interview data involves identifying patterns, themes, and categories within the transcripts. Thematic analysis is a common method used to uncover underlying meanings and structures. By carefully coding and categorizing the data, researchers can develop a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perspectives on integrity.

Conducting in-depth interviews requires careful planning and execution. Building rapport with participants, ensuring confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent are essential ethical considerations. By following rigorous research practices, researchers can produce credible and valuable findings that contribute to the understanding and promotion of integrity in English language teaching. The categorization of data were analysed into **lecturers related factors and institutional factors.**

## **FINDINGS**

### **Lecturer-Related Factors in Integrity in Language Teaching**

Lecturer-related factors significantly influence the establishment of an integrity-centered learning environment. A lecturer's personal values and beliefs serve as the foundation for their professional conduct. Those with a strong moral compass are more likely to prioritize integrity in their interactions with students (Rest & Narvaez, 1994). Their ethical orientation, whether rooted in deontological, utilitarian, or virtue-based principles, shapes decision-making and classroom practices (Trevino & Nelson, 2007). Cultural background also plays a role in shaping a lecturer's perception of integrity, influencing their approach to teaching and interacting with students (Hofstede, 1980).

Professional ethics are paramount in upholding integrity. A deep commitment to student success and well-being is essential for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Adherence to professional standards, such as fair assessment practices and respect for intellectual property, reinforces a lecturer's credibility (Schön, 1983). Lifelong learning is crucial for staying updated on ethical guidelines and best practices (Schön, 1983), enabling lecturers to adapt to evolving challenges and opportunities.

Effective pedagogical practices are instrumental in fostering integrity. Creating a classroom climate built on respect, inclusivity, and honesty cultivates a sense of trust and



accountability among students (Rogers, 1969). Fair and transparent assessment practices promote academic integrity, while providing constructive feedback empowers students to take ownership of their learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Lecturers serve as role models, demonstrating integrity through their actions and words (Bandura, 1977).

However, lecturers face challenges in maintaining integrity, including heavy workloads, institutional pressures, and societal expectations. Addressing these challenges requires support from institutions and a commitment to professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2006). By understanding the intricate interplay of personal values, professional ethics, and pedagogical practices, researchers can gain insights into the factors that contribute to or hinder integrity in language teaching.

Lecturer-related factors significantly influence the creation of an integrity-driven learning environment. These factors encompass a lecturer’s personal values, professional ethics, and pedagogical practices. As stated by one of the participants in this research: **choosing a profession as an educator means I must be a good role model for my students in behaving character.**

**Table 1.1. Lecturers related factors**

<b>Lecturers related factors</b>		
<b>Personal Values and Beliefs</b>	<b>Professional Ethics</b>	<b>Pedagogical Practices</b>
Moral compass	Commitment to students	Classroom climate
Ethical orientation	Adherence to professional standards	Assessment practices
Cultural background	Lifelong learning	Feedback provision Role modeling

A moral compass is often described as an internal guide that helps individuals discern between right and wrong. It's a framework of values, beliefs, and principles that shape our actions and decisions. This compass is not a static entity; it evolves over time, influenced by experiences, knowledge, and societal interactions. Its core, a moral compass is about understanding and upholding ethical standards. It involves recognizing the impact of our choices on ourselves and others, and striving to act in a way that promotes well-being and fairness. While there are universal moral principles shared by many cultures, individual moral compasses can vary significantly due to cultural, religious, and personal factors.

Developing a strong moral compass is essential for personal growth and societal harmony. It provides a foundation for building trust, fostering relationships, and making sound judgments. When faced with ethical dilemmas, a well-defined moral compass can offer guidance and help us make choices that align with our values. Even the most conscientious individuals can make mistakes or succumb to pressures that compromise their values. However, by regularly reflecting on our actions and seeking to understand different perspectives, we can continuously refine our moral compass and strive to live a life of integrity.

Besides, Ethical orientation which refers to an individual's underlying beliefs and values that guide their moral judgments and actions is the internal compass that helps individuals navigate ethical dilemmas and make choices that align with their principles.

This orientation is shaped by a variety of factors, including cultural upbringing, personal experiences, education, and religious beliefs. It is essential to recognize that ethical orientations can vary widely among individuals and across different cultures.

Understanding one's ethical orientation is crucial for personal and professional development. It provides a foundation for making informed decisions, building trust, and fostering ethical behaviour. By reflecting on one's values and beliefs, individuals can develop a stronger sense of purpose and integrity. Additionally, understanding the ethical orientations of others can help to bridge differences and promote cooperation. Ethical orientation is not static; it can evolve over time as individuals gain new experiences and knowledge. It is important to continuously reflect on one's values and beliefs to ensure that they remain aligned with personal and professional goals. By cultivating a strong ethical orientation, individuals can contribute to a more just and equitable society.

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### **Institutional Factors Promoting Integrity in Language Teaching**

Institutional factors are instrumental in cultivating a culture of integrity within the realm of language teaching. Strong leadership, characterized by a commitment to ethical conduct, is paramount in setting the tone for the entire institution. Leaders who exemplify integrity inspire trust and accountability among faculty and staff (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Clear and comprehensive ethical guidelines and policies provide a framework for navigating complex situations. These documents outline expected behaviors, consequences for misconduct, and mechanisms for reporting violations. Consistent enforcement of these policies fosters a culture of accountability and reinforces the institution's commitment to integrity (Trevino & Nelson, 2007).

Professional development opportunities are essential for equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to uphold integrity. By providing training in ethical decision-making, conflict resolution, and cultural competence, institutions can empower teachers to address challenges and make sound ethical judgments (Schön, 1983).

Accountability systems that incorporate ethical considerations are crucial for promoting integrity. Performance evaluations should assess teachers' adherence to ethical standards and provide opportunities for feedback and improvement. Moreover, creating platforms for teachers to voice concerns and contribute to policy development enhances a sense of ownership and accountability (Fullan, 1993). Collaboration among faculty, administrators, and support staff is essential for fostering a shared commitment to integrity. By working together, institutions can create a supportive environment where ethical dilemmas can be discussed openly and collaboratively addressed.

**Table 1.2. Potential Indicators of Institutional Support**

<b>Potential Indicators of Institutional Support</b>			
<b>Resource Allocation</b>	<b>Faculty Support</b>	<b>Curriculum Development</b>	<b>Student Support</b>
Budgetary allocation for English language programs and departments.	Faculty workload and teaching loads.	Emphasis on English language skills in the overall curriculum.	Availability of language labs, tutoring services, and English language clubs.
Availability of teaching materials, technology, and facilities.	Opportunities for professional development and research.	Integration of English language learning into other disciplines.	English proficiency requirements for graduation
Faculty recruitment and retention rates.			

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, integrity emerges as an indispensable quality for English teachers in Indonesian universities. It is a cornerstone upon which effective teaching, student learning, and professional growth are built. By embodying integrity, teachers not only impart language skills but also cultivate students' character and ethical development. This research underscores the significance of integrity in fostering a trusting and respectful learning environment, where students feel motivated to reach their full potential. As such, it is imperative for educational institutions to prioritize the development of integrity among their faculty and to create a supportive culture that values honesty, fairness, and responsibility.

Future research could delve deeper into the specific manifestations of integrity in the English language classroom, exploring how teachers can effectively integrate integrity-based teaching practices into their curriculum. Additionally, investigating the long-term impact of teacher integrity on student outcomes would provide valuable insights into the enduring benefits of this essential quality.

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