Gender and Careful Linguistic Behaviour

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Introduction

In sociolinguistic research, the topic of gender difference in accordance with language use has thrown light on a number of social, cultural and psychological aspects of both groups in every community. In Pakistan, this sociolinguistic aspect of language use also needs to be studied critically for the equal rights and security of women identity. This will investigate the variation of some sociolinguistic features by examining them within the language of both genders in order to determine whether there are differences according to speech style in terms of degree of 'carefulness'.

The research is closely related to some of the fundamental issues of gender differences in language use. Gender differences can be understood by the analysis of language in the context of general behaviour.

Gender differences, in the context of sociolinguistics, have been studied in great detail over the past few decades. There are mainly two significant approaches which provide direction in this research area. The dominance approach suggests that males have a dominating role from the beginning and females have a subordinating role and their language use represents the same identification indeed. The difference approach is based on the argument that men and women belong to different subcultures and there is an essential difference in their social and psychological hierarchy. However, the gender difference through language use is very important to study the sociolinguistic and cultural aspects of every community as it personifies the general tendency of male and female behaviour.

Objectives

- The study aims to observe variation of some sociolinguistic features by examining them within the language of both genders in order to determine whether there are differences according to speech style in terms of degree of 'carefulness'.
- 2. The study aims at finding out the frequencies of those words which are casually used by both genders to see difference in using specific sociolinguistic feature i.e.

hypercorrect grammar, hedges, use of modal verbs, special linking words in Urdu language and the words spoken in Italics (Intensifiers).

Research Questions

This study was designed to find out the answers to two major research questions:

- (i) Is there any significance difference between the usage of hedges, hypercorrect grammar, modal verbs, words spoken in Italics and special linking words with reference to Urdu language between both genders during conversation?
- (ii) Is there any significance difference in using the correct and hypercorrect grammar in both genders? Moreover this variation will be observed at inter speaker and intra speaker levels?

Although the issue of gender difference in language use is not new to the world, however, it is an important discussion in present times. This is because the emergence of group identity of females as a significant separate culture in all societies has added their importance to the community. This distinction can be observed in Pakistan as well. This difference cannot be overlooked and needs to be studied in detail as it has not yet been explored much from this perspective.

Despite the enormous information about the ways in which both groups have different style of language use, it is difficult to find out valid constraints on gender difference with reference to careful linguistic use. It is mostly a complex mixture of social and psychological aspects. There are a number of variables like education, age, economic condition and social status which may affect. This study aims at finding out this difference with a special context i.e. the link between gender and careful language use in Pakistani community.

Research Design

To make it a significant contribution in the field of sociolinguistic research with reference to local community, a multidimensional research design has been formulated with specific tools and techniques. Data for this study has been taken from multimedia resources. Twelve television programs based on talk shows and panel discussions were recorded as input data.

Data is analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively by categorizing under different heads to facilitate the process of analysis. Linguistic variables during communication are categorized based on Hedge use; modal verbs and use of hypercorrect grammar. These features were analyzed to examine the frequency of difference between males and females for the usage of these categories. The input TV recordings were taken from different Pakistani channels. It was ensured that issues covered on these talk shows involve social, political, economic and educational aspects of life so that the frequency of difference could also be studied through a comparative analysis. Talk shows and panel discussions have been chosen to acquire a formal domain of language use. Informal domain such as home, family and sports were not being included.

Population

This study is based on conversational analysis. That's why the people who participated in panel discussions and live talk shows were the target population for this purpose. Moreover, in this circle of population, it is easy to find out variety of social, political and economic background. It was necessary to include maximum diversity.

Sample

The purposive sampling technique was used and only those participants were selected who were related to the media group that owned the recording. It was ensured that equal proportion of males and females participants was present in the samples.

Instruments

The observation technique was used as an instrument for data collection. Therefore, tape recordings were used. This type of observation is called concealed observation. In concealed observation participants are not aware of being observed.

Collection of Data

Data for the study was collected from television programs. In total, ten television programs, based on talk shows and discussion panels, were selected to generate data for the research. To find out variety of speakers having different kind of socio-cultural background, these programs remained very much important throughout the research. It was manageable to find out maximum three males and three females with sufficient part of conversation within these programs. It was easily possible to find out required frequencies and percentages of each linguistic variable.

In the beginning, it was examined that these talk shows and panel discussions cover a variety of domains pertaining to the social, political, economic, educational and religious aspects of life so that the frequencies of various linguistic variables in different speakers could also be studied through a comparative analysis.

However, since in Pakistani media mostly talk shows and discussion panels have very formal and serious pattern of conversation. So, all the data, gathered for the present research contained the formal domain of language use. Informal domains, such as home, family and sports, were not included.

Variables

Independent variable was gender which was measured on nominal scale. Nominal variables are assigned unique but arbitrary values. Huizingh (2007) said that nominal scale applies when a property is not quantifiable but can only be identified. Examples include properties like hair colour, brand of tennis racket, gender, and blood group.

Other five linguistic variables, given below, were dependent variables on ratio scale.

- 1) Hypercorrect grammar
- 2) Hedges
- 3) Special linking words (Urdu language)
- 4) Intensifiers (Urdu language)
- 5) Modal verbs

"The ratio scale possesses all the properties of the interval scale and in addition has a natural zero point. Consequently, not only the differences between the numbers on the scale have a real and consistent meaning, but this also applies to the ratio between two numbers. Examples of yardstick are lengths, widths, distances, sums of money and numbers."(Huizingh, 2007)

Chi-Square Test

With the help of chi-square test, it is easy to determine whether the observed frequencies in different categories of a variable match with the expected frequencies (Huizingh, 2007). In this study, the test was used to find out whether two variables were having the differences. The test was performed with the 'Nonmetric Tests' command which was meant to test the distribution of each variable. This test can be used to determine whether

various categories of a variable contain equal numbers of cases. Hence, it helped to find out the differences in frequencies of each linguistic variable in accordance with their usage.

Transcription of Data

Since no standard symbols are available for the transcription of Urdu data but linguistic variants have been written in bold and transliteration of a material has been done. Moreover the study is only relevant with lexical items of conversation instead of paralinguistic items. It is comparative study for finding out differences in frequencies of linguistic items.

Quantitative Analysis

Section I

Linguistic variables Male 1 Male 2 Male 3 Female 1 Female 2 Female 3 Hypercorrect 3 2 2 6 4 4 2 2 Hedges 2 4 4 4 2 3 5 Special linking words 3 5 6 Words spoken in Italics 3 3 3 4 5 3 Modal verbs 2 2 2 4 3 6

Summary of All Clips with All Linguistic Variables

Note: M1=First male, M2=Second male, M3=Third male, F1=First female, F2=Second female, F3=Third female

Table 6 reflects that on average, M1 has done three times hypercorrect grammar and the usage of modal verb is two times, M2 has done two times hypercorrect grammar on average and the usage of hedges are also two times only, M3 has used three times on average special linking words and same times used those words being spoken in Italics. F1 has done on average six times hypercorrect grammar, six times used special linking words on average and the frequency of the rest of linguistic variables remained four times for each. F2 has used three times modal verbs and five times special linking words. F3 has used significant numbers of the usage of modal verbs whereas hedges have also been used four times on average.

Table

Statistical Comparison of Both Genders with Reference to All Linguistic Variables under Observation

	Male	F	Female	÷	² value	p-value
	f	%	f	%		
Hypercorrect	7	13	14	32	7.09	0.131
Hedges	6	14	12	22		
Special linking						
words	8	18	16	30		
Speak in Italics	7	16	13	24		
Modal verbs	6	14	10	19		

Note: M1=First male, M2=Second male, M3=Third male, F1=First female, F2=Second female, F3=Third female

Chi square test shows that the ratio of using hypercorrect grammar of males is 13 % and females is 32%, at least one and a half time greater than males'. Likewise, the ratio of using hedges is 14% of males and 22% of females. The ratio of males in using special linking words with reference to Urdu language is less than the ratio of females for using these particular particles. The ratio of using words spoken in Italics of males is not equal to females' ratio for using these words. Males also tend to use less modal verbs as compared to females. Their percentage of using them is 14 % and females use them with 19%.

As we know that with the help of chi square test, it is easy to determine whether the observed frequencies in different categories of a variable match with the expected frequencies or not. (Huizingh, 2007) In this research, the test was used to find out whether two variables were having the differences. The chi square test performed with the Nonmetric Tests command which was meant to test the distribution of each variable. This test can be used to determine whether various categories of a variable contain equal numbers of cases. So it

helped to find out the differences in frequencies of each linguistic variable in accordance with their usage.

The statistical analysis of all above linguistic variables shows some meaningful differences of using these variables with reference to both genders. It is not statistical difference as word count analysis is difficult to have large data for counting frequencies. Conversational analysis is delimited on required words, phrases and sentences. Whereas, it is needed for statistical difference a huge data based on lot of numbers and their multiplication. The differences of percentages and graphical representation of data provides enough evidence for the difference.

Graphical Representation of Linguistic Variables Taken for analysis



Figure 1

On x- axis, those linguistic variables have been written, which used for finding out the variation in both genders. On y-axis, percentages of clips have been shown.

Quantitative Analysis

Section II

Table

Hypercorrect Grammar	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3
1	0	0	0	1	3	2
2	0	1	3	2	3	2
3	1	1	3	6	4	5
4	2	1	3	6		
5	2	3	3			
6	3	3	3			
7	3					
8	3					

Summary of Twelve Clips of the Usage of 'Hypercorrect Grammar' of Both Genders

Note: M1=First male, M2=Second male, M3=Third male, F1=First female, F2=Second female, F3=Third female

Eight clips have been taken for hypercorrect grammar analysis, in which if we see table1, M1 has used one time hypercorrect grammar in three clips, two times in four clips, two times in five clips, three times in six clips and three times also in seven and eight clips. M2 has used one time in two clips and three times in seven clips. Likewise, M3 has used three times on average. If we see F1 then hypercorrect grammar has been used one time in one clip, two times in two clips, six times in three clips and six times in four clips. F2 has done three times in one clip and three times in two clips and four times in three clips. F3 has used two times in one clip, two times in two times in two clips and five times in three clips. So, on average, if we see according to these clips, females tend to do more hypercorrect grammar during cross-cultural communication.

Table

Correct Grammar	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3
1		3 4	3	2	1	2
2	5	5 4	3	2	2	3
3	2	5 5	4	3	2	3
4	6	5 5	4	3	3	3
5	6	5 5	5	3		3
6		6	5	4	3	
7			5			
8						
Note: M1-First male		1 1 1 1	1 11 11 1		1.6 1	

Summary of Eight Clips of the Usage of 'Correct Grammar' of Both Genders

Note: M1=First male, M2=Second male, M3=Third male, F1=First female, F2=Second female, F3=Third female

Eight clips have been taken for the analysis of correct grammar. In which M1 has used three times in one clip, five times in two clips and six times in five clips. M2 has used four times in clip one, five times in three clips and six times in six clips. M3 has done three times in one clip, four times in four clips and five times in seven clips. In opposite case, F1 has done two times in one clip, three times in three clips and four times in six clips. F2 has done two times in two clips, three times in four clips and three times in six clips. F3 has done two times in one clip, three times in two clips and three times in five clips. It shows that women are less frequent in using correct forms of grammar regarding those particular variables taken for observation

Table

	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3
Hypercorrect Grammar						
	3	2	1.75	6.125	4.5	3
Correct Grammar	5.375	4.5	4.25	2.75	2.75	2.5

Summary of All Clips with Hypercorrect and Correct Grammar Usage of Both Genders

Table 3 shows that on average, M1 has used three times hypercorrect grammar whereas five times correct form of grammar, M2 has used two times on average hypercorrect form of grammar and four times correct form of grammar and M3 has used on average only one time hypercorrect form of grammar and four times correct form of grammar. On other part, F1 has used on average six times hypercorrect form of grammar and two times correct form of grammar, M2 has used three times hypercorrect form of grammar and two times correct form of grammar.

Table

Statistical Comparison of Both Genders with Reference to Hypercorrect Grammar

	Male	Female		\div ² value		p-value
	F	%	F	%		
Hypercorrect Grammar					3.95	0.047
	7	35	14	64		
Correct Grammar	14	65	8	36		

Usage and Correct Grammar Usage

Table 4 shows the chi square value of using hypercorrect and correct grammar with intra speaker and inter speaker variation. The value of chi square (p=0.047) shows the significant difference between using hypercorrect grammar in both genders. If we examine this calculation with simple percentages of both genders values, it seems that 35% males are

using hypercorrect grammar and 65% males are using correct grammar with those particular words taken for analysis, females tend to use quite opposite direction. They use 64% hypercorrect grammar and 36% correct grammar.

Evidence also shows that there is found difference not only in inter speaker cross cultural communication, but significant difference is also found across the intra speaker variation. Male tend to use correct grammar more as compared to hypercorrect grammar and females tend to use less frequently correct forms of grammar in relevant society.

Figure 2



On x- axis, those linguistic variables have been written, which are used for finding out the variation in both genders in order to find out the difference between the usage of hypercorrect and correct use of grammar. On y-axis, percentages of clips have been shown.

The quantitative analysis was aimed at enlisting the frequencies of under examined linguistic variables and finding out whether the differences in frequencies exist and with what proportions. The overall aim was to find out the phenomenon or degree of carefulness in language use. The qualitative analysis was discussed in the context and function of linguistic variables. It also examined the linguistic variation with respect to gender dialogues and their feelings. It examined the special usage of Urdu language words to distinguish between the genders. In short, the social role and linguistic behaviour of genders were investigated.

To some extent, this study achieved these objectives but language is a dynamic phenomenon. It is not possible to provide definite answers. Apart from gender, there are a **Language in India** <u>www.languageinindia.com</u> **ISSN 1930-2940 13:6 June 2013** Urooj Fatima Alvi, M.Phil. (Linguistics) and Dr. Shafqat Rasool, Ph.D. (Education) Gender and Careful Linguistic Behaviour number of social, psychological and economic factors that are involved in the phenomenon. These all are sometimes working as an independent phenomenon. Sometimes they act as a mutually connected phenomenon. This study assists in understanding the phenomenon of careful linguistic use of the relevant community in Urdu language. Quantitative analysis was proved to be a successful way to measure the word frequencies of Urdu language speakers.

Qualitative analysis proved more appropriate to address questions, such as the speaker is using which variable at what time with which frequency and why. Both methods have clearly defined the language change phenomenon, with special reference to gender. Language change is a process which exists in every society and every culture. So the present study is a fine contribution in this context.

Linguistic variables	Male	Female
	%	%
Hypercorrect	13	32
hedges	14	22
Special linking words	18	30
Speak in Italics	16	24
Modal verbs	14	19

Differences in Women's and Men's Language

Data was analyzed under SPSS. Chi-squared test was used to convert the simple means into percentage value.

Total eight clips were taken for analysis containing approximately 40 minutes. Every speaker has an average seven to eight minutes to speak, so the required words were taken through word count analysis. After counting the words, mean of every speaker relevant to every linguistic variable had been taken. But the objective was not limited to these lines. Chi-squared test was applied on each category and the difference was found.

Unfortunately, significant different of one hypothesis was not found as the dataset was not large enough. The data based on conversation is difficult to find out in large sizes. However, the actual purpose behind these variables was to find out the degree of carefulness in women's linguistic behaviour.

Accordingly, there was meaningful difference in using these linguistic variables. The percentage of using all these linguistic variables was higher in women language use as stated above. According to this corpus, women were using 32 % of hypercorrect grammar whereas men were using 13 %. Women were using 22 % hedges and men were 14 % hedges. Women were using 30% special linking words of Urdu language and men were using 18 %. Women were using the words spoken in Italics 24 % and men were using 16 %. Women were using 19 % and men are using 14 %.

A qualitative inquiry was also done into the related process of language variation with respect to gender and language change. An effort was made to see that in which conditions or circumstances speakers are changing linguistic variables and using some variables with low or high frequency.

Women's Carefulness in Language Use

In the considered community, women language use was more careful than men. They were using hypercorrect grammar more frequently. In under-examined grammatical particles, this is the elimination of glottal sound after some consonants due to more conscious and careful linguistic behaviour of females. It is observed that when they are in any kind of emotional state in cross cultural communication like anger or despair, they use hypercorrect forms more often. This is the phonological variation. So there can be a number of other factors involved in phonological variation as women have high pitch than men. It is observed that if any consonant sound of b, r, and n comes before glottal /h/ sound, they are observed to skip the glottal sound in Urdu language. In normal emotional state or relaxed mood they do not do so more frequently. So, particularly, with this reference, this study shows that speaker's emotional state sometimes has visible impact on language in peripheral manner. It is also noted that this linguistic change is not seen as a diachronic change in Urdu language. Speakers are using both forms of these grammatical particles with glottal sound and without glottal sound. Only variation is found and this variation is found with significant difference on both inter speaker and intra speaker level.

According to Meyerhoff (2006), the linguistic variation is quite predictable and depends entirely on the immediate linguistic context in which variants occur. The same speaker will sometimes use one variant and sometimes the other variant. The same speaker may even alternate in different sentences. Since 1960s, Sociolinguists have observed considerable evidence showing that speaker variability can be constrained by non-linguistic

factors as well as by linguistic factors. However, it was argued by Meyerhoff (2006) "No social or contextual constraint determines where you will hear one form rather than another 100 per cent of the time. However, they will tell you how likely you are to hear different forms in different contexts and with different speakers. The difference is probabilistic."

Another important result is that the elements of language change and gender correlate and there is further research required in this area. According to Trudgill (1986, p 79), "The men have a great many expressions peculiar to them which the women understand but never pronounce themselves. On the other hand, the women have words and phrases which the men use, or they would be laughed to scorn. Thus it happens that in their conversations it often seems as if the women had another language than the men." Furthermore, "The geographical, ethnic group and social class varieties are at least partly, the result of social distance, while sex varieties are the result of social differences."

According to this study, as far as women language use is concerned, it is comparatively more careful than men. Their language is representation of their general behaviour. Although, significant difference is not found due to small corpus but there was statistical difference with reference to four categories of linguistic variables. These are hedges, special linking words in Urdu language, words spoken in Italics ad modal verbs. In case of the usage of hypercorrect grammar showed striking results.

Linguistic variable	Male		Female		χ^2 value	p-value
	f	%	f	%		
Hypercorrect Grammar					3.95	0.047
	7	35	14	64		
Correct Grammar	14	65	8	36		

In the fourth category of linguistic variable, hypercorrect grammar, it is clearly noted that the difference is significant. Not only there is significant difference in the use of hypercorrect grammar in males and females, there is significant difference in using hypercorrect grammar and correct grammar which shows the intra speaker variation. Women used 64 % hypercorrect grammar and 36 % correct grammar on average and men used 35 % hypercorrect grammar and 65 % correct grammar on average. The value of chi-squared

(p=0.047) shows the significance difference between using hypercorrect grammar in both genders.

The linguistic variables chosen for the research have been further eliminated by specific number of words or phrases. These words have necessary functions in Urdu language.

Women's Linguistic Behaviour is parallel to Their General Behaviour

To analyze the data, main course was speakers' conversation. As conversation is very vague term for data analysis quantitatively so it would be more appropriate to say that conversation is based on speech units. Every speech unit has some utterances and those utterances have been analyzed separately to find out the frequencies of proposed linguistic variables. An utterance has an exact definition to refer to the whole linguistic production of each person (Bayer, 2000). It has the single function in a conversation during each turn, in a single sound, in a word, in a phrase, in a sentence, or even in a series of sentences.

Other studies have shown that women tend to use the standard language more than men do. Climate (1997) believes that females generally use speech to develop and maintain relationships. They use language to achieve intimacy. Tannen (1990) states that women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence.

Hypercorrect grammar is the term which non-standard usage that results from the over application of a perceived rule of grammar or a usage prescription. A speaker or writer who produces a hypercorrection generally believes that the form is correct through misunderstanding of these rules often combined with a desire to seem formal or educated. Linguistic hypercorrection occurs when a real or imagined grammatical rule is applied in an appropriate context. In this study, there is a significant difference between the uses of hypercorrect grammar of selected words taken from Urdu language.

The chi-squared value (p=0.47) shows this significant difference. Women use 64% hypercorrect grammar and 36 % correct grammar. Overall, men in this corpus use 35 % hypercorrect grammar and 65% correct grammar. Hence, we can say that there is also significant difference in the use of hypercorrect grammar and correct grammar.

Contribution of This Study

Language use and gender has become a universal, obvious and frequently observable phenomenon on international and national level but limited work has been done in Pakistan to fully explore the processes of language variation according to gender role. With particular reference to Urdu language wide-ranging efforts are needed to work in this area. The study investigates these phenomena and provides an insight into these processes from linguistic and social role of gender perspectives.

This study is likely to contribute to the following distinct areas:

Providing valuable understanding of the language use processes involved in linguistic variation and the role of gender in using Urdu language. Language change is also a burning issue regarding sociolinguistic studies. The process of language change through gender is considerable element of this study. With reference to this study, it is noticeable that the glottal sound /h/ performs as phonological linguistic variable. Two variants of this variable are being used by Urdu speakers.

(h) = /h/, / Φ /

It will help in understanding of different behavior of males and females towards using some linguistic item in different way. For example, the qualitative data analysis shows some important findings regarding the issue. During the intensity of emotions, women seem to pronounce hypercorrect forms of grammars with reference to those particular particles taken from the corpus. Women are considered more emotional than men according to some psychological studies. And their language reflects their emotional state.

The study will add to research methodology in Pakistan in the field of language use and language variation with reference to gender. For example, the research provides farreaching information in conducting research design to analyze the conversation with modern techniques of content analysis and SPSS. So, it is proved as a better specimen to observe the recorded data under qualitative and quantitative approach.

Recommendations

To understand the mechanism of linguistic use and gender, language change and language variation in Pakistan with particular reference to gender further investigation is needed. The present study has raised a number of issues which need further exploration. One consideration for further research could be to work on the gender language use in other domains of social life. The present research has focused on the formal domains of language use. Informal domains of language such as family, home and friends, need to be explored.

Apart from the domains studied in this work, a wide range of other parameters such as professional, economic background, family background, social class, ethnic identity etc need to be considered as they play a very significant role in the process of language maintenance and variation. Therefore, it should be studied in the context of language change & variation and the role of gender in this regard.

This work has explored how far television reflects the process of language variation in accordance with gender and other related processes. Another area of further research could be related to the study of how these phenomena are reflected in live talk and conversation. Moreover, written corpus can also be studied. Print media such as newspaper and magazines can also be interesting areas of investigation for future research in this regard. For example, daily conversation reflects the actual usage of language.

Any change or variation in language through various factors and the impact of an assortment of factors should be quantified and then explained with in-depth description. As words are not only the words spoken by speakers, they are in fact the representative of different social and psychological backgrounds. Through conversation analysis, the process of language change, language variation, language hybridization, borrowed words in language and many other areas with the influence of gender can be studied and analyzed for language planning and language development.

There are still many dimensions that are unexplored and require further research. For instance, it is necessary to explore what are the linguistic and socio-cultural implications of language change and variation with reference to gender use in advertisement on both the electronic and print media. Another area of further research could be related to the study of implication of language change and gender in the pedagogical context of Pakistan. There is also need to address how these processes can be exploited to devise an approach to teaching and learning of language in Pakistan.

Conclusion

It is not possible to give final answers to the research questions raised at the beginning of this research. However, this work provides an insight into wide-spread areas of language differences with respect to gender usage and language variation. It is noted that linguistic variation has been observed with synchronic change and on the both inter speaker and intra speaker variation levels. Significant findings emerged as a result. Firstly, the research establishes the statement that female speakers are more careful than male in using different linguistic variables. Secondly, with reference to the use of hypercorrect grammar, female speakers use it more frequently in their language due to their more careful and conscious behaviour towards language use. Apart from assessing the careful behaviour, it is essential to quote the linguistic variation in using particular linguistic items of hypercorrect grammar.

The glottal sound /h/ is being eliminated in Urdu language if it occurs after three consonant sounds i.e. /r/, /b/ and /n/. The interpretation and analysis procedures involved in the study also make it evident that linguistic use and linguistic variation are very much relevant to the gender. In our community, these dimensions are interrelated to a great extent and strongly reflect upon each other. Language change is a continuous and on-going process. Therefore, it is interesting to study this area for further planning and development of language.

It is expected that this work will not only help in understanding the process of language differences and language variation with respect to gender role but also will open new dimensions in this area of exploration. It will provide more awareness of the use of Urdu language in Pakistani community and its change and variation in terms of its speaker's usage. It will also contribute towards efforts for the planning and development of Urdu language.

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