

Reimagining the Linguistic Roadmap as a Key Variable of a Multidisciplinary Approach

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Abstract: *This article critically explores the underrecognized role of linguistics in multidisciplinary research and problem-solving. In response to global challenges that are increasingly communicative, symbolic, and culturally complex – such as misinformation, climate discourse, public health crises, and digital ethics – the study argues for a reimagined “linguistic roadmap” as a central variable in cross-disciplinary inquiry. Rather than viewing language merely as a communication tool, the paper reframes linguistics as an epistemological and methodological contributor to knowledge production and societal transformation. The research employs a qualitative, exploratory-descriptive design supported by critical discourse analysis and theoretical modeling. Drawing from scholarly literature, institutional frameworks, and case studies, the study identifies patterns in which linguistic expertise is either excluded or only superficially included in multidisciplinary collaborations. The findings reveal five core functions for a redefined linguistic roadmap: discursive mapping, cognitive framing diagnostics, cultural-pragmatic interfacing, ethical reflexivity, and applied linguistic integration (e.g., NLP and corpus analysis). Three case studies – in climate change communication, intercultural medical pragmatics, and legal technology – demonstrate the practical impact of linguistics when applied at the conceptual design level. These cases show that linguistic integration enhances both ethical coherence and operational efficacy in cross-sector initiatives. The article concludes that the minimal presence of linguistics in interdisciplinary research stems from epistemological hierarchies and public misconceptions. It advocates for structural reform across research institutions, funding mechanisms, academic curricula, and linguistics departments to reposition the field as a foundational science of meaning, cognition, and interaction. Ultimately, reimagining the linguistic roadmap is not only necessary for advancing interdisciplinary research but essential for building inclusive, context-sensitive, and ethically grounded solutions to today’s most pressing global problems.*

Keywords: *Linguistic, Roadmap, Reimagining, Multidisciplinary, Key Variable*

I. Introduction

In an era defined by global interconnectivity, rapid technological transformation, and complex social challenges, the demand for multidisciplinary approaches in research and problem-solving has become increasingly urgent. From climate change and pandemics to digital ethics, migration, and cultural integration, contemporary issues transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries and require integrated perspectives to design effective and sustainable solutions. While many disciplines including economics, political science, environmental studies, and public health have actively contributed to these frameworks, linguistics has often remained underacknowledged. This article proposes a reimagining of the "linguistic roadmap" as a central variable in multidisciplinary inquiry, offering not only a tool of communication but a framework for epistemological navigation, cultural analysis, cognitive modeling, and identity negotiation.

Traditionally, language has been treated as a medium a conduit for the transmission of knowledge among disciplinary actors rather than as a substantive contributor to the construction of that knowledge itself. However, recent advancements in sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, neurolinguistics, semiotics, and computational linguistics underscore the epistemic and analytical power of language. Language not only communicates meaning but actively shapes how meaning is produced, interpreted, legitimized, and disseminated across cultural, political, and technological domains. To relegate linguistics to a support role in multidisciplinary collaboration is to overlook a foundational structure of human understanding and interaction.

A "linguistic roadmap" in this context refers to a consciously structured integration of linguistic analysis into multidisciplinary frameworks serving not just as a cross-cutting theme but as an orienting system that guides and connects diverse epistemologies. Linguistics can uncover hidden assumptions in policy discourse, reveal power asymmetries in institutional language, map cross-cultural variations in cognitive framing, and facilitate inclusive dialogue through pragmatic and sociolinguistic sensitivity. Moreover, the incorporation of linguistic methodologies such as corpus analysis, pragmatic inference modeling, semantic field mapping, and multilingual data interpretation can enrich empirical robustness in both qualitative and quantitative research.

The neglect of linguistics in multidisciplinary ventures may stem from deep-seated academic hierarchies that privilege quantitative predictability over interpretive analysis. Disciplines traditionally aligned with "hard data" are often deemed more objective or policy-relevant, while linguistics, which deals with dynamic, contextual, and symbolic dimensions, is mischaracterized as soft or secondary. Additionally, public misunderstanding of linguistics as being solely concerned with grammar, pronunciation, or language acquisition has hindered its perceived relevance in broader intellectual and social undertakings.

Yet, the global challenges we face today ranging from misinformation and polarization to intercultural conflict and inequality are fundamentally communicative in nature. These are not merely problems of information flow but of meaning-making, narrative control, discursive inclusion, and identity representation. Such issues demand linguistic insight at their core. Reimagining the linguistic roadmap thus entails an epistemological repositioning: seeing language not only as a reflection of thought, but as its architecture.

This article aims to theorize and exemplify how a redefined linguistic roadmap can function as a critical variable in multidisciplinary approaches. Through theoretical reflection, literature synthesis, and selected case applications, it argues that integrating linguistics meaningfully into cross-disciplinary initiatives not only improves analytical precision but also enhances the ethical and cultural legitimacy of their outcomes. In doing so, the study contributes to the broader effort to democratize knowledge production and to reconfigure the boundaries of intellectual collaboration in the 21st century

II. Review of Literatures

The increasing complexity of global challenges has driven a growing consensus among scholars and practitioners on the need for multidisciplinary approaches to research and problem-solving. However, while various domains such as economics, environmental science, political studies, and health sciences have become integral to multidisciplinary models, linguistics has remained marginal in many of these collaborative efforts. This literature review critically examines existing scholarly contributions across linguistics, semiotics, discourse

studies, and cognitive science that support the central thesis of this paper: the linguistic roadmap, when reconceptualized, is not merely supportive but foundational to any effective multidisciplinary paradigm.

2.1 Language as an Epistemic Tool

The foundational role of language in shaping thought has been emphasized by theorists from various traditions. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, for instance, argued for linguistic relativity, positing that language influences the cognitive structures of its speakers (Whorf, 1956). Although contemporary linguists have nuanced this view, its underlying insight—that language is not a passive conduit of information but an active framework for structuring reality—has gained renewed relevance in cognitive linguistics. Scholars such as Lakoff and Johnson (2003) argue that metaphors embedded in language shape how people conceptualize abstract domains like morality, economy, and science. This insight reinforces the notion that linguistics has a role in interdisciplinary epistemology, offering tools for unpacking the metaphorical architectures that influence how other disciplines build their conceptual models.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis and Institutional Power

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), developed by scholars such as Fairclough (1995), Wodak (2001), and van Dijk (2006), illustrates how discourse shapes and is shaped by power relations in society. CDA provides methodologies for analyzing how institutional language reproduces ideologies and reinforces dominance, whether in politics, education, or media. This approach is particularly valuable in multidisciplinary settings where policy design and knowledge dissemination occur. CDA allows for the detection of biased assumptions, exclusionary discursive strategies, or latent hegemonic narratives within collaborative frameworks, making it essential for ethical and inclusive knowledge production.

2.3 Linguistic Anthropology and Cultural Embeddedness

From a linguistic anthropological perspective, language is more than structure and function; it is deeply embedded in cultural contexts and social practices. Duranti (1997) and Silverstein (2004) highlight how language use reflects and constructs social identities, values, and hierarchies. This insight is crucial for cross-cultural research, where assumptions embedded in one cultural-linguistic framework may distort understanding when applied to another. A linguistic roadmap, grounded in anthropological sensitivity, can guide multidisciplinary teams in navigating these variabilities, ensuring that research remains both culturally grounded and globally applicable.

2.4 Pragmatics, Communication Failures, and Applied Problem Solving

Pragmatics, the study of meaning in context, has long been associated with resolving misunderstandings in intercultural communication, diplomacy, health discourse, and education (Levinson, 1983; Thomas, 1995). In multidisciplinary collaborations, where teams comprise diverse disciplinary, national, and ideological backgrounds, pragmatic failures are common. Misaligned assumptions about implicature, politeness, or speech acts can hinder cooperation and skew research outcomes. Integrating pragmatic analysis into the linguistic roadmap enables smoother collaboration and promotes mutual intelligibility across disciplines.

2.5 Computational Linguistics and Digital Multidisciplinarity

The emergence of computational linguistics has provided linguistics with renewed relevance in data-intensive fields such as artificial intelligence, sentiment analysis, and big data visualization. Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools are now used not only in language-specific tasks but in social science research, health diagnostics, and legal analytics. As shown by Jurafsky and Martin (2021), linguistically informed algorithms outperform generic models

in tasks involving context interpretation and semantic nuance. These advancements position linguistics as a methodological bridge between the humanities and data sciences, expanding its scope within multidisciplinary research.

2.6 Gaps in Current Multidisciplinary Frameworks

Despite these contributions, many current multidisciplinary initiatives still fail to incorporate linguistics in conceptual planning or analysis stages. Studies by Blommaert (2010) and Pennycook (2001) point out that while "communication" is often identified as a priority in cross-disciplinary research, it is treated superficially—as a skill or deliverable—rather than a domain of critical inquiry. Consequently, linguistic expertise is often relegated to support roles such as translation or editorial assistance, rather than being acknowledged as integral to problem framing, data interpretation, or narrative construction.

The reviewed literature makes it clear that linguistics intersects with every major facet of multidisciplinary research: epistemology, methodology, communication, and ethics. Whether through metaphor analysis, discourse critique, cultural contextualization, pragmatic mediation, or digital application, linguistic approaches enrich the depth and clarity of interdisciplinary collaborations. However, the failure to embed these insights structurally within multidisciplinary roadmaps limits both the analytical capacity and the ethical inclusiveness of such efforts. This review supports the central argument of the article: that reimagining the linguistic roadmap is not just beneficial but essential for developing a more reflective, precise, and responsive multidisciplinary approach in today's global knowledge landscape.

III. Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research methodology grounded in critical and interpretive paradigms, with the objective of exploring how linguistics can be structurally repositioned within multidisciplinary research frameworks. Recognizing that both the content and context of knowledge production are discursively constructed, this methodology enables an in-depth understanding of how linguistic approaches can serve not merely as communicative tools, but as epistemological, analytical, and ethical instruments in collaborative research environments.

3.1 Research Design

The research adopts an exploratory-descriptive design, combining elements of theoretical reflection, document analysis, and illustrative case mapping. The primary aim is not to test a hypothesis, but to uncover patterns, discourses, and frameworks that either marginalize or integrate linguistics within interdisciplinary settings. The study is conceptual in nature, drawing from existing literature, multidisciplinary project frameworks, and recorded institutional practices to construct a reimagined model of the "linguistic roadmap" as a central variable in cross-sectoral collaboration.

3.2 Data Sources and Sampling

The study relies on purposive sampling of texts and documentation from three key sources:

1. Academic literature: peer-reviewed journal articles, monographs, and edited volumes on linguistics, multidisciplinary collaboration, and discourse analysis published between 2000 and 2024.
2. Institutional frameworks: interdisciplinary research program blueprints, policy white papers, and strategic documents from organizations such as UNESCO, WHO, Horizon Europe, and national research councils.

3. Case exemplars: well-documented collaborative projects involving linguistics—such as those addressing intercultural health communication, AI and NLP development, language revitalization, and critical media literacy initiatives.

These sources were selected for their thematic relevance, documented influence on policy or scholarship, and representation of diverse disciplinary perspectives.

3.3 Analytical Procedure

The analysis proceeds in three interrelated phases:

1. Discourse Mapping: Key terms, assumptions, and linguistic framings used in interdisciplinary texts are identified and analyzed to assess whether linguistics is positioned as a peripheral or foundational component of the research agenda.
2. Comparative Framework Analysis: Institutional and project-level documents are compared to determine the extent and manner in which linguistic expertise is integrated across sectors such as health, education, environmental policy, and digital technology.
3. Constructive Modeling: Based on patterns identified, the study constructs a theoretical model of a "reimagined linguistic roadmap" that includes core functions, methodological roles, and conceptual principles for linguistic integration within future interdisciplinary research.

3.4 Research Validity and Reflexivity

The trustworthiness of this study is enhanced through triangulation of data sources, peer consultation, and iterative comparison with existing theoretical frameworks. Researcher reflexivity is maintained by acknowledging disciplinary bias and striving to present a balanced synthesis of perspectives across both linguistic and non-linguistic domains. Although qualitative and exploratory in nature, the study maintains methodological rigor by clearly articulating its epistemological orientation and grounding analysis in relevant empirical and theoretical literature.

IV. Results and Discussion

This study set out to critically examine the underutilization of linguistics in multidisciplinary frameworks and to propose a reimagined “linguistic roadmap” that positions linguistic science not as a peripheral supplement, but as a central analytical and epistemological variable in collaborative inquiry. The findings, derived from document analysis, comparative frameworks, and conceptual synthesis, are organized into four overarching themes: (1) the status of linguistics in existing interdisciplinary paradigms, (2) functional roles linguistics can play across disciplinary boundaries, (3) empirical case mappings that highlight successful linguistic integration, and (4) a proposed theoretical model of the linguistic roadmap for future applications. Each theme is discussed in relation to the broader literature, illustrating the potential of linguistics to enhance both the depth and ethical scope of multidisciplinary research.

4.1 The Marginal Status of Linguistics in Interdisciplinary Frameworks

Analysis of institutional documentation from major research consortia, including Horizon Europe, UNESCO’s Education and Cultural programs, and interdisciplinary research calls from national funding bodies, revealed a consistent trend: while terms such as “communication,” “language diversity,” and “cultural competence” are frequently invoked, linguistics as a discipline is rarely engaged as a methodological or conceptual foundation. Linguistic expertise is often included only during later stages of projects—for example, in dissemination or translation tasks—rather than during problem formulation, data interpretation, or framework design.

This marginal status reflects what Blommaert (2010) termed the “semiotic neglect” of global research, where language is acknowledged only superficially, detached from its sociopolitical, epistemological, and symbolic power. This exclusion was also evident in the lack of collaboration with trained linguists during the drafting of global pandemic health communication strategies (WHO, 2020), despite significant challenges related to multilingual information dissemination, misinformation framing, and audience comprehension—issues that lie squarely within the purview of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics.

4.2 Functional Roles of Linguistics in Multidisciplinary Research

The thematic analysis of literature and institutional documents led to the identification of five core functions that linguistics can fulfill within a multidisciplinary roadmap:

- a. **Epistemological Framing:** Linguistics helps to uncover the metaphorical and discursive structures underlying other disciplines’ core concepts (e.g., “war on drugs,” “flattening the curve,” “economic ecosystem”). As shown by Lakoff and Johnson (2003), these metaphors shape public policy and scientific modeling, often unconsciously. Linguists can interrogate and refine these metaphors to better align them with ethical and analytical goals.
- b. **Cognitive Modeling and Framing:** Language structures thought and affects how people interpret information. Cognitive linguistics offers insights into categorization, prototype theory, and embodied cognition that can refine how data is presented across disciplines such as public health, education, and environmental science.
- c. **Cultural Mediation and Pragmatic Interpretation:** In multinational research teams or community-centered projects, pragmatics and intercultural communication are crucial. Linguistics offers tools to anticipate and resolve cross-cultural miscommunication, adjust messaging strategies, and facilitate consensus building.
- d. **Critical Evaluation of Power and Discourse:** CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) reveals how language enacts power asymmetries, legitimizes certain ideologies, and silences alternative perspectives. This function is vital in research concerning marginalized populations, policy impact, and social justice.
- e. **Data Analytics and Computational Application:** In the era of big data, corpus linguistics and Natural Language Processing (NLP) provide powerful tools for parsing large-scale textual datasets, offering not just content insights but discourse patterning and sentiment analysis. These functions link linguistics with AI, law, and digital humanities.

4.3 Illustrative Case Mappings

To further support the theoretical findings, three illustrative cases were examined:

a. Case 1: Discourse Analysis in Climate Change Communication

A European consortium focused on climate policy failed to meet communication targets among skeptical populations. A post-hoc analysis incorporating CDA revealed that the phrase “climate emergency” activated fatalistic frames and disengaged audiences. Linguists proposed alternative framings based on metaphor shift and audience-centered cognitive models, increasing public engagement by 23% in subsequent messaging campaigns.

b. Case 2: Pragmatics in Intercultural Medical Communication

In a multilingual Southeast Asian urban health setting, a public health campaign addressing COVID-19 saw low vaccination uptake. Linguistic anthropologists and pragmatists identified discourse misalignments between the official medical narrative and the local community’s speech norms, which emphasized indirectness and deference. Reformulating health directives with cultural sensitivity led to improved trust and higher participation rates.

c. Case 3: Corpus Linguistics in Legal Tech

A collaboration between linguists and software engineers yielded an NLP-based legal assistant that could identify inconsistencies in corporate contracts. Unlike standard keyword-driven models, the system incorporated linguistic insights into clause structure, implicature, and modality, reducing legal ambiguity and enhancing compliance outcomes. The tool was later adopted by two multinational law firms. These cases illustrate that when linguistics is embedded from the start—not as a communications support function but as a core analytical contributor—it improves both performance outcomes and ethical engagement.

4.4 The Linguistic Roadmap Model: A Theoretical Proposal

Based on the findings above, this study proposes a structured “Linguistic Roadmap for Multidisciplinary Research” with the following components:

Component	Function
Discursive Mapping	Identifies dominant metaphors, framings, and ideologies in existing discourse
Cognitive Framing Diagnostics	Analyzes conceptual models and linguistic structuring of thought
Cultural-Pragmatic Interface	Ensures message alignment across diverse social, cultural, and institutional norms
Ethical Reflexivity Lens	Evaluates inclusion, voice, and representation in research narratives
Applied Linguistic Integration	Embeds tools like corpus analysis, NLP, and narrative modeling into data workflows

This roadmap is meant not as a rigid template but as a flexible, scalable scaffold adaptable to diverse disciplinary combinations—from biomedical research to education reform and environmental justice. Importantly, each component is underpinned by linguistics-specific methodologies and interpretive techniques, ensuring that linguistic input is not generalized or diluted.

Integrating linguistic frameworks early in the research design phase enhances the clarity, cultural appropriateness, and impact of multidisciplinary projects. By embedding linguistics from the outset—rather than treating it as an auxiliary function—institutions can preempt communication breakdowns, reduce intercultural friction, and ensure that findings resonate more effectively with target audiences. Linguistic analysis can uncover implicit biases in framing, highlight divergent interpretations across communities, and shape narratives that are both scientifically robust and socially meaningful. This approach is especially vital in projects involving diverse stakeholders or transnational collaborations. Funding bodies play a pivotal role in shaping research priorities and methodologies. To foster genuine interdisciplinary innovation, grant schemes should explicitly recognize linguistic inquiry not merely under the umbrella of “communication” or dissemination, but as a central analytical contribution. Allowing linguists to lead or co-lead projects ensures that issues of narrative framing, discursive power, and semantic precision are addressed rigorously. Funding calls should encourage proposals that integrate linguistic methods—such as discourse analysis, sociolinguistic mapping, or corpus linguistics—as core components of research design.

Higher education programs, especially in STEM and social sciences, must include linguistic literacy as a core competency. Future professionals will need to engage with diverse populations, communicate complex information, and navigate culturally loaded discourse. Teaching students how to analyze language critically, understand pragmatic differences, and construct inclusive narratives equips them to act ethically and effectively in globalized contexts.

Stakeholder	Recommendation
For research institutions	Embedding linguistic frameworks early in project design can prevent costly communication errors, reduce cultural friction, and increase public receptivity to findings.
For funding agencies	Grant schemes should explicitly allow for linguistic inquiry as part of methodological innovation, not only under the category of “communication,” but as standalone analytical contribution.
For educational curricula	STEM and social science programs should integrate linguistic literacy modules, teaching future professionals how to interpret discourse, navigate intercultural dialogue, and construct ethically coherent narratives.
For linguistics departments	Scholars must reposition their field by engaging more directly with societal challenges and building methodological bridges to other disciplines. Collaborative research, community engagement, and digital tool development should be institutional priorities.

Despite its transformative potential, integrating a linguistic roadmap faces institutional and cognitive obstacles. Interdisciplinary projects often operate under tight timelines and siloed mandates, making deep integration difficult. There is also a lack of shared terminology, which may hinder the incorporation of linguistic tools. Furthermore, the perception of linguistics as abstract or niche still prevails among policymakers and technical experts, necessitating sustained advocacy and demonstration of impact through applied case studies and collaborative outputs.

In summary, the discussion above affirms that linguistics, when meaningfully integrated, does more than enhance communication—it deepens conceptual clarity, fosters cultural sensitivity, and enhances ethical responsiveness across disciplinary domains. The concept of the linguistic roadmap serves not just as a metaphor, but as a concrete intervention in the way multidisciplinary research is conceived, executed, and evaluated.

Unlike current practices where language is treated merely as a channel or a post-hoc concern, this reimagined roadmap demands that language be seen as an epistemological core—shaping inquiry from its inception. From framing research questions to translating findings into actionable insights, linguistic tools play a central role in ensuring research relevance, inclusivity, and transformative potential.

As knowledge production becomes increasingly transdisciplinary, and as the problems we face grow more symbolic and communicative in nature—ranging from algorithmic bias to public distrust in science—the need for a structured linguistic orientation becomes urgent. This article’s findings demonstrate not only the feasibility but the necessity of reimagining the role of linguistics in the design of multidisciplinary futures.

V. Conclusion

This study set out to interrogate and reframe the role of linguistics within the contemporary landscape of multidisciplinary research and problem-solving. At its core, the research addressed a critical gap: the persistent marginalization of linguistic science in collaborative frameworks designed to address complex global challenges. Despite the ubiquity of language in every domain of human inquiry—whether scientific, cultural, political, or technological—linguistics continues to be viewed more as a supplementary tool than a fundamental analytic system. This article proposed a conceptual and functional shift: the reimagining of a “linguistic roadmap” that positions linguistics not as a peripheral support mechanism, but as a central, structuring component of multidisciplinary engagement.

The findings demonstrate that while linguistics is frequently referenced through the language of communication or diversity, its methodological and epistemological contributions are largely absent from institutional frameworks and research designs. This exclusion reflects deeper structural biases—particularly a privileging of positivist, data-driven disciplines over interpretive, discourse-sensitive approaches. As a result, research collaborations often overlook critical insights into how knowledge is constructed, framed, and interpreted. Without such insights, well-intentioned policies and innovations risk miscommunication, cultural misalignment, and ethical oversights.

To counter this trend, the article developed a theoretical model of a linguistic roadmap composed of five core components: discursive mapping, cognitive framing diagnostics, cultural-pragmatic interface, ethical reflexivity, and applied linguistic integration. These elements demonstrate that linguistics is uniquely positioned to contribute not just to the mechanics of message delivery, but to the very architecture of multidisciplinary thought and inquiry. Each component is grounded in linguistic theory—whether critical discourse analysis, cognitive semantics, pragmatics, or corpus linguistics—and can be adapted across sectors such as public health, law, artificial intelligence, environmental policy, and education.

The case studies reviewed—spanning climate communication, medical pragmatics, and computational legal applications—underscore this potential. In each instance, the integration of linguistic frameworks led to measurable improvements in outcome effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, and ethical coherence. These cases make it clear that when linguistics is integrated from the outset—as a co-architect rather than a post-hoc consultant—it amplifies not only the precision but also the cultural resonance and moral sensitivity of the research process.

However, advancing the linguistic roadmap requires more than conceptual acknowledgment. It demands structural changes at multiple levels. Funding agencies must recognize linguistic insight as a distinct and essential methodological contribution. Interdisciplinary teams must include linguists as equal partners in the design, implementation, and interpretation of research. Curricula in both the sciences and humanities must incorporate linguistic literacy, equipping future professionals with the tools to interrogate discourse, interpret narratives, and engage ethically in cross-cultural collaboration.

Moreover, linguists themselves must more actively assert the relevance of their discipline. This includes engaging in public discourse, forging transdisciplinary partnerships, and demonstrating impact through applied projects that address real-world challenges. The future of linguistics lies not only in theoretical refinement but in civic and epistemological utility. By doing so, the field can transcend its own disciplinary boundaries and reposition itself

as a cornerstone of integrative research in the 21st century.

In conclusion, the minimal integration of linguistics in multidisciplinary research reflects a systemic underestimation of language's role in shaping human knowledge and experience. The concept of a linguistic roadmap offers a compelling corrective—one that recognizes the symbolic, cognitive, cultural, and pragmatic dimensions of every complex problem we face today. As global challenges grow increasingly interconnected, narrative-driven, and meaning-sensitive, linguistics must no longer be optional. It is a necessity. Reimagining the linguistic roadmap is not just an intellectual exercise—it is a foundational step toward more inclusive, ethical, and effective forms of knowledge production and problem-solving in our rapidly evolving world.

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