

Adapting to Different Commitments: The Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of Working vs Non-Working Students

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Abstract: This study wants to investigate the difference between working and non-working students using six SRLS dimensions. This study applied a qualitative approach with the case study as a research design. The participants of this study are two male university students: working and non-working students, from the English education department of a private university in Malang. The researcher used two instruments to collect the data: interviews and documentation. The interview questions consist of 20 items and have six themes: goal setting, task strategies, time management, environment structuring, help-seeking, and self-evaluation. The documents were in the form of pictures of the participants applying the six dimensions of SRLS when studying. To collect the data the researcher interviewed participants lasting 20-25 minutes each interview and asked participants for pictures related to the use of the six dimensions of SRLS. The researcher used embedded analysis to analyze the data, involving transcribing, familiarizing, coding, theming, and interpreting participants' responses, and analyzed documents for authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning based on six dimensions of SRLS. Based on the result of this study, it is evident that working and non-working students apply all the elements in the six dimensions of SRLS to excel in their study. They have similarities and differences while using the SRLS, they are on the same page when it comes to task management, environment structuring, and help-seeking. Their flexibility when learning through content, their need for an environment free from distractions, and their help-seeking behavior are why both have similarities when using the SRLS. Despite the similarity, they have different approaches to goal setting, time management, and self-evaluation. These differences come from a combination of personal characteristics, experience, motivation, and personal background.

Keywords: self-regulated learning strategies, working students, non-working students.

INTRODUCTION

Self-Regulated Learning Strategies (SRLS), as described by Paris and Paris (2001), represent a cognitive motivation strategy in education that considers the comprehensive development of students' skills, knowledge, and motivation. Theoretically, self-regulation is an important aspect of student learning. Self-regulated learners have the cognitive and metacognitive abilities and the motivational beliefs and attitudes necessary to understand, monitor, and direct their learning (El-Adl & Alkharusi, 2020). Schunk and Zimmerman (1997) outline the characteristics considered a self-regulated learning process, which includes

using a variety of learning strategies, demonstrating self-efficacy in using these strategies and having a commitment to achieving goals.

According to Zimmerman (1994, 1998), there are six dimensions of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies (SRLS) including motive, method, time, physical environment, social environment, and performance. The first dimension is motive, which is important for setting goals, developing positive self-talk, and managing students' emotions. Method refers to the ways in which the learner learns, such as summarizing, taking notes, asking questions, practicing, and using visual aids. The time dimension involves considering when and how long to study, and dealing with issues such as procrastination and time management. The physical environment focuses on creating a learning space desired by students such as a calm, free from distractions, and comfortable atmosphere. The social environment involves learners' ability to seek help when needed, know where to seek help, and communicate their needs effectively. Finally, performance includes observing, reflecting, making self-assessments, and comparing current performance to make necessary adjustments (Zimmerman, 1998) as cited in Andrade & Bunker (2009).

In recent years, there has been plenty of research on the role of self-regulation in students' learning processes. Haron et al. (2014) have revealed that students performed better with the use of SRLS as opposed to students who did not. Similarly, Dradkh (2018) found significant differences in self-regulation among Saudi university students in favor of students with high academic success. Along the same line of research, Zhou and Wang (2019) found positive correlations among academic achievement, self-regulation, and motivated learning strategies for Chinese students. Also, Anthonysamy et al. (2021) confirmed that SRLS did contribute positively to digital learning success in blended learning environments in private higher education institutions in Malaysia. Overall, recent research has documented the importance of self-regulation in student learning across various educational contexts.

The importance of the SRLS mentioned above is primarily addressed to non-working students (those who study, not while working). However, many students especially at higher education institutions (HEIS) increasingly prefer to be working-students (Abenoja et al., 2019). Many of working-students continue their education while working part-time for various motives. Financial aspects are the main and most common reason for students to work, either to cover school costs or to ease the financial burden on their families. (Remenick & Bergman, 2021). Another reason that plays a role is that students want to gain experience, expand their association, or career-related reasons (Nurpahmi & Tamrin, 2015). Working while studying, on the other hand, may assist students in obtaining money, networks, and job-related skills (Creed et al., 2015). However, work may interfere with students' academic engagement and performance (Chang, 2023).

Studying while working can help students obtain extra money, be independent person, and be good person at managing their time between studying and working (Curtis & Shani, 2002). However, working students also have negative impacts, their work can make students too lazy to go to campus or finish their studies because they are too busy with work (Neyt et al., 2019). Balancing work and student roles is quite difficult because of the negative consequences of spending too little time studying (Hunt et al., 2004). Students' psychology is also affected by part-time work because many of the students push themselves and have little time to rest. For that reason, Carney et al (2005), reported that working students were 'feeling

stressed' since coming to university. Part-time employment also appears to influence academic accomplishment; Creed et al. (2015) discovered that 40% of working students felt that their work harmed their university performance. Students are struggling because they must satisfy work requirements to keep their jobs and maintain academic performance to avoid receiving a failing grade (Abenoja et al., 2019).

To reduce the negative impact on working students, they need to have effective study habits and adapt their learning approaches to the new academic environment (Öztürk & Çakıroğlu, 2021). One of the factors that contribute to the working student's success in learning activities is learning strategies (Sampelolo & Atmowardoyo, 2016). Learning strategies that working students could use to gain success in working and studying at the same time is SRLS. Being an independent learner is necessary at the university level because students must take responsibility for their learning, especially for working students. In other words, working students need to become more self-directed and make decisions about strategies that work best for their learning (Irsyadella, 2020).

Furthermore, there are several studies conducted on the use of SRLS by working students. One of the studies conducted by Afandi and Ismail (2022) showed that self-regulated learning affected role conflict in working students. This means that role conflict in working students is also determined by how effectively they regulate their learning activities. Also, research on the relationship between self-regulated and role conflict in students conducted by Febriany et al (2017) suggests a significant negative relationship between self-regulated and role conflict, where the higher the self-regulation, the lower the role conflict. Along the same line, Rahmadani (2023) concluded that using the six dimensions of SRLS can help working students overcome the responsibilities of being students and workers. SRLS reflects the fact that students who organize their learning efficiently, monitor their learning progress, and continually adjust their study behavior accordingly can perform better and have a higher level of academic adjustment (Cazan, 2012).

A previous study comparing learning strategies between working and non-working students was carried out by Gumartifa and Syahri (2022). They found that working students applied memory strategies in their learning process, whereas non-working students applied all learning strategies at the medium-level category. It can be interpreted that non-working students did not comprehend and realize the use of learning strategies. However, the learning strategies used in that study were not SRLS, but learning strategies in general, even a study comparing the use of SRLS by working and non-working students is yet to be found. Most of the studies above of working students using SRLS are taken in a quantitative approach. In this case, the current study is carried out to seek and compare how working and non-working students apply their SRLS more deeply in a qualitative approach. This study can be used as a reference and makes it easier for working and non-working students when use SRLS while learning. Also, studies on SRLS rarely use a qualitative approach, so this research can provide a different perspective from previous studies. Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the research question as follow: How do working and non-working English students apply SRLS?

METHOD

This study applied a qualitative approach with the multiple case study as a research design. The participants of this study are Tomo and Yama (pseudonym). Tomo (21 years old) is a university student at a private university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The participants were selected using purposive sampling because they met the criteria of the topic in this study, which they are studying at university, one of them taking a part-time job, have good academic achievement, and are willing to participate in this study.

The researcher used two instruments to collect the data. There are interviews and documentation. First, the data in this study was generated through interviews. The interview questions were adapted questionnaires from (Zheng et al., 2018) about six dimensions of SRLS, also self-made by the researcher and validated by the expert in self-regulated learning. The researcher made slight changes to the questionnaire (Zheng et al., 2018) for suitability in this study, the researcher changed the statements in the questionnaire into open-ended questions and gave participants the freedom to express their answers more deeply. To make it easier for participants to understand the interview questions, the interview was conducted using the participants' first language, Indonesian. For documentation, the documents collected such as pictures of the participants imply self-regulated learning strategies when studying. The researcher asked participants whether they had documentation related to using the six dimensions of SRLS.

To collect data, the researcher conducted interviews directly with both participants. First of all, the researcher introduced himself and explained that the interview being conducted was strictly confidential. The participants were given a clear explanation of the research objectives by the researcher before the interview procedure. The interviews are performed directly with the participants and recorded using a recorder, every interview lasts between 15-20 minutes. For the document collection, the researcher asked participants for images that visualize the use of six dimensions of SRLS, such as a picture of their daily schedule, a list of goals to be achieved, or notes while studying.

At the analysis stage of this study, in data analysis, the researcher used the embedded analysis method, which is by more in-depth investigation. After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data according to (Brown & Clarke, 2006) this analysis uses coding and themes with the initial step, namely: first, the researcher will do the transcribing stage, after that familiarizing, by reading the transcript repeatedly until the researcher feels more familiar with the answers given by participants. The next step is coding, which marks the participant's statement. Then theming, which is to make a theme or grouping on the participant's statement that has been coded at the coding stage. The last step is interpretation, in this step, the researcher re-analyzed the strategies used by participants in six dimensions of self-regulated learning strategies.

For the document, the researcher analyzes the document within four factors, authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning (Morgan, 2022). Authenticity means that the researcher asks for the images directly from the participant, credibility means the researcher ensures the images are clear and not blurry, representativeness means that researchers must confirm that the images follow the six dimensions of SRLS theory, then finally the researcher determines the meaning of the images.

FINDINGS

These findings provide answers to the research questions, how do working and non-working English students apply Self-Regulated Learning Strategies (SRLS)?

1. Working student

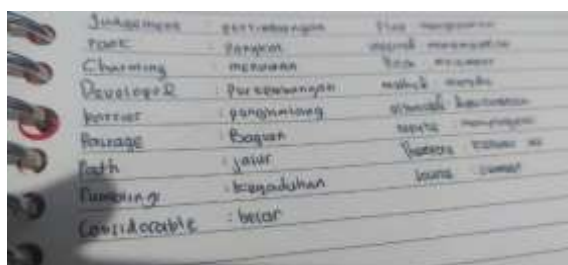
This participant will be called Yama (pseudonym), Yama is a working student who is currently in his eighth semester at a private university in Malang. The following are the results of the researcher's interview with Yama about how he applies the six dimensions of SRLS when he studies.

Setting Goals

His past experiences and cultural background influence Yama's goals. Because of his experience at an Islamic boarding school, he set specific targets such as memorizing vocabulary to improve his English skills.

"Coincidentally, I was in an Islamic boarding school environment where our habit is to memorize, so I also had a goal, namely memorizing and mastering 10 new vocabulary words every week and I believed that this would be able to improve my English skills."

Picture 1.1 New Vocabulary



Yama's experience in the Islamic boarding school environment has influenced his learning habits and goals. Therefore Yama outlined a specific goal to memorize and master 10 new vocabulary words every week, as shown in the picture above.

Task Management

Yama uses a variety of learning methods, from listening to Western songs to reading English stories, he actively engages with the content to improve his language skills.

"I usually listen to a lot of Western songs to improve my listening skills and if there are words in the lyrics of the song that I don't understand, I will find out the meaning and significance. I also often read stories that use English to improve my skills."

Picture 1.2 English story



Yama mentioned listening to a lot of Western songs as a method to improve his listening skills. Additionally, Yama showed active engagement with the content of the songs by looking for the meaning and significance of foreign words in the lyrics. In addition to the picture above, Yama mentioned reading stories in English as another strategy to improve his skills. According to him, reading stories in English can give him practice in different writing styles, vocabulary, and grammatical structures, thereby contributing to his overall English proficiency.

Time Management

Yama faces the challenge of balancing work and study commitments to make the most of the time available. Despite the obstacles caused by work, he dedicated his evenings to academic pursuits.

"It's also a bit difficult for me to divide my own time because the distance between my house and my place of work is 20 km, so I always look for free time when I'm not working. Usually in the evenings after I work, this is the time I use to study and also do lecture assignments."

Yama faces challenges in managing his study time because he also has to work, and the distance between his house and work is 20 kilometers, so he doesn't have much free time. Considering his limited time, Yama said that he usually uses the evening, after finishing work, as time to study and complete lecture assignments.

Environment Structuring

Yama prioritizes a calm, distraction-free environment for studying, preferring to study alone. Allows him to concentrate effectively and minimizes distractions.

"When I'm in a room alone and there are no people is my ideal place to study, because I find it quite difficult to concentrate when there are people around me when I study. So, the best place for me to study is in my room when I am alone and have minimal distractions."

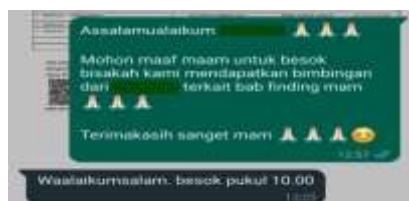
Yama finds it difficult to focus on studying when other people are present. He prefers studying alone and with minimal distractions to concentrate effectively. The ideal environment for Yama to study is in his room when he is alone, so he can control his surroundings and create a conducive learning atmosphere.

Help-Seeking

Yama shows a preference for studying alone but also actively seeks guidance from experts to increase his understanding.

"I am very interested when studying and asking questions from more expert people such as lecturers or teachers, but I rarely study with friends... as long as I am on this campus, if I don't understand something while studying I mostly ask the lecturer directly."

Picture 1.3 Text with lecture



Yama prefers to seek guidance from experts such as lecturers or teachers rather than studying with friends, the picture above is one example of how Yama seeks consultation with his lecturers. Yama Prefers to seek direct assistance from experts due to his dedication to academic excellence and desire to fully understand the material being studied.

Self-Evaluation

Yama prioritizes personal understanding and mastery of material over external measures of success. Rather than relying solely on grades, he assesses his learning based on his understanding and ability to explain the material to himself.

“I rarely evaluate myself based on the grades I get, but the evaluation I do is when I learn about something, whether I understand what I just learned, whether I can explain it coherently to myself if I can explain it well. That means I already understand what I'm learning.”

Yama prioritizes understanding and mastery of material over grades. Rather than focusing solely on academic achievement as demonstrated by grades, he assesses his learning by evaluating his understanding and ability to explain things he has learned to himself. Yama values genuine learning experiences and personal understanding over measures of success in grades.

2. Non-Working Student

The researcher called the participant by the name Tomo (pseudonym), Tomo is an eighth-semester student at a private university in Malang. This is Tomo's explanation after being interviewed by researchers about the use of the six dimensions of SRLS when he was studying.

Setting Goals

Tomo's approach to setting goals reflects a focus on continuous improvement. Rather than setting specific targets, he instead engaged in a continuous process of identifying areas he had yet to learn.

“When studying, I don't make a specific target, but I make a list of what I haven't learned... I always have high standards for completing assignments because I am quite a perfectionist.”

Tomo does not set specific goals regarding what he wants to achieve, but instead focuses on identifying what he has not learned. Additionally, the statement highlights that Tomo holds high standards when completing tasks due to his perfectionism.

Task Management

Tomo uses a variety of learning methods, exploring various media, from videos to podcasts, showing openness to various learning methods.

“The way I learn is quite varied, sometimes watching videos, reading, and listening to podcasts. The podcasts are about lessons or assignments I'm working on...I rarely take notes when studying. When I make notes I only make points.”

Picture 2.1 Lessons channel



Tomo uses a variety of methods to learn, including watching videos, reading, and listening to podcasts. In the picture above, It's a YouTube channel that Tomo often visits when he wants to learn new things in English. Furthermore, the statement revealed that Tomo rarely took notes while studying, and when he did, he only noted down the important points.

Time Management

Tomo's study habits are influenced by his preferred time of day and the urgency of the subject matter. While he doesn't follow a strict schedule, he makes the most of the mornings when he feels most focused.

"I often study in the morning between 6 and 9, I don't have a specific schedule for studying, and it also depends on the urgency of studying."

Tomo tends to study in the morning, usually between 6 and 9 am. However, he did not follow a strict study schedule; rather, his study habits seemed to be influenced by the urgency of the material he needed to learn. Tomo also explained that he studies in the morning because this is the time he feels most alert and focused.

Environment Structuring

Tomo prioritizes a calm and distraction-free environment for studying, preferring to study alone. His preference for solitude allows him to maintain control over his learning methods and focus without external distractions.

"I am comfortable with a place that is rather quiet and doesn't make a lot of noise. I prefer to study alone and not in groups."

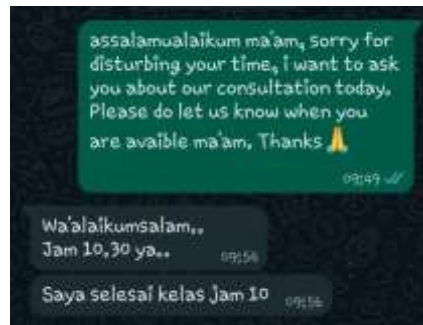
Tomo prefers a quiet and relatively noise-free environment for studying. He finds it easier to concentrate and focus on his studies when there are very few distractions. In addition, Tomo feels more productive and efficient when studying alone because he can control his study method and focus without the influence or interference of other people.

Help-Seeking

Tomo prefers to study alone and seeks help from lecturers when necessary. Although he values independent learning, he recognizes the importance of seeking help when facing challenges.

"I rarely study with other people because it's hard to concentrate and I'm also more comfortable studying alone... I would explore further, but if I'm stuck, I'll ask the lecturer so I can understand more."

Picture 2.2 Text with lecture



Although Tomo prefers to study alone, he is willing to seek help when needed. As in the picture above, Tomo mentioned that he asked for consultation from lecturers when he had difficulties while he was studying, showing a willingness to overcome obstacles and deepen his understanding of the subject matter.

Self-Evaluation

Tomo reflects on his academic performance and actively seeks reasons for any shortcomings, emphasizing a commitment to continuous improvement.

“Of course, sometimes when my grades drop I look for reasons why my grades are not optimal, whether it's because I'm not active enough in class or it could be due to other factors.”

This statement shows that Tomo is self-conscious about his academic achievements, especially when his grades decline, he looks for reasons why his grades are less than optimal. The mention of being less active in class implies that Tomo realizes the importance of participation and involvement in the learning process. In addition, he also realized that other factors might come into play when evaluating his learning performance.

DISCUSSION

Both working and non-working students actively use the six dimensions of SRLS. The terms of the six dimensions of SRLS are different from Zimmerman's (1994, 1998) theories, because the instrument in this research was adapted from Zheng et. al. (2018) and they changed the terms to fit their research. The changes are goal setting refers to motive, task management refers to method, time management refers to time, environment structuring refers to the physical environment, help-seeking refers to the social environment, and self-evaluation refers to performance.

The first dimension is goal setting, the working student sets a specific goal, namely memorizing and mastering new vocabulary every week. This is following research conducted by Umamah & Cahyono (2020) which suggests that students set certain goals for their assignments and create an effective schedule to achieve each goal. For task management, he used various learning methods and content such as reading, note-taking, memorizing, and practicing. The time management for the working student is he has put more effort into managing his time because of work and learning commitments. Poor time management can cause difficulties in the learning process and achieving success, as stated by Abadikhah et al. (2018). Then for the environment structuring he looking for a quiet place for learning because

he wants to avoid distraction. Help-seeking is one of the strategies that working students use, he prefers asking the experts such as the lecturer when he face difficulties in learning. This aligns with the research by Yot-Domínguez and Marcelo (2017), which indicates that university students typically favor seeking social support. For self-evaluation, working student prefer evaluate his learning process, for example, he practice explaining to himself after he learn something new.

Meanwhile, the non-working student's approach to setting goals is less structured, focusing more on setting high standards for his learning. For task management, he uses various methods namely memorizing, listening, and note-taking, also he uses various learning content such as listening to podcasts about the material he wants to learn and YouTube videos. According to Wang and Chen (2019), YouTube provides a versatile, interesting, and interactive platform to facilitate learning. Time management of non-working is quite flexible, he prefers to study in the morning when he feels most alert in studying. The environment structuring of non-working students is also a quiet, distraction-free environment, prioritizing studying alone to maximize his focus and productivity. Earlier studies have also found that reducing distractions during learning can enhance students' concentration and focus (Rusticus et al., 2023). Then seeking help is used when he faces difficulties in learning, he prefers to contact lecturers for explanations rather than studying with friends. Self-evaluation process of a non-working student involves reflection on the result of his study, to identify areas for improvement in his learning outcomes. The student evaluation process can improve their academic performance by increasing awareness of their weaknesses and areas requiring improvement, as highlighted by Thabet Abadel et al. (2024).

In using the six dimensions of SRLS, working and non-working students have differences and similarities. First, they have different motivations and goals that drive their learning strategies. Although the working student's goal was a specific time per week to improve his English skills, the non-working student focused on maintaining high standards and continuous improvement. Their differences regarding goal setting highlight how individual experiences, backgrounds, and personal characteristics can influence a person's approach to learning and goal setting. This is in line with previous research which revealed that the environment and habits can influence students' learning motivation (Pérez-Navío et al., 2023).

Another difference is their time management, working student with limited free time, must put more effort into managing his studies and work time compared to non-working students who have more flexibility in managing his time and approach to studying. These differences in background and experience shape their learning strategies. Working student faces challenges in time management due to his work commitments, which impact his study time and the strategies he can implement. In contrast, non-working student may have more control over his study schedule and can allocate his time according to his preferences. Previous studies align with this result says that work and study time pressures increase the work-study conflict felt by working students (Wan et al., 2022).

In addition, working and non-working students have different perspectives regarding self-evaluation. Although both prioritize understanding the material, the working student focuses solely on understanding and his ability to explain understanding to himself. Instead,

the non-working student considers external factors such as class participation and grades in the evaluation process. They have different self-evaluation methods because working students tend to focus more on evaluating his learning process, while non-working students focus more on evaluating his learning outcomes. The student evaluation process can significantly improve their abilities in academic performance by raising awareness of their weaknesses and areas for improvement (Thabet Abadel et al., 2024).

In the similarity aspects, working and non-working students demonstrated adaptability to the task management approach. They use various learning content and methods such as listening to music, reading, and watching videos to improve their skills. Both use taking notes, memorizing, practicing, and asking questions as their learning method. The use of content-based learning or social media as a learning tool can have a positive impact on students' education quality (Al-Rahmi et al., 2022). Working and non-working students also preferred studying alone in a quiet environment, indicating similarities in preferences for minimizing distractions. They have similar reasons, working student may find it difficult to focus when other people are around, and non-working student prefers to be alone due to his need for focus and concentration. Previous research also identified that minimal distractions in learning can increase concentration in learning by students (Rusticus et al., 2023).

Even though working and non-working students prefer to study alone, they agree that when they have difficulty learning, they will seek help from experts, such as lecturers. They prioritize independent learning but recognize the importance of expert guidance to overcome challenges and deepen their understanding. This is also in line with previous studies which say that interactions with instructors can aid, technical support, and academic guidance to a student (Qureshi et al., 2023). Overall, the differences and similarities in working and non-working students' learning strategies are influenced by a combination of personal factors, experience, and motivation. These factors help explain why individuals have different approaches to self-regulated learning and adapt their strategies based on their circumstances and goals.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the discussion above, it is clear that working and non-working students need to use the six dimensions of SRLS in order to achieve success in their learning. They show similarities and differences in using the six dimensions of SRLS. The working and non-working students are on the same page in the use of task management, environment structuring, and help-seeking when applying the six dimensions of SRLS. Their adaptability in learning through content, preference for distraction-free environments, and help-seeking behavior are the reasons why they can have similarities in using the six dimensions of SRLS. However, despite these similarities, there are differences between the two. The differences are in setting goals, time management, and self-evaluation. These differences come from a combination of personal characteristics, experience, motivation, and personal background. In conclusion, their motivations, goals, backgrounds, self-preference, and experiences contribute to variations in how they approach the six dimensions of SRLS.

The researcher wants to provide suggestions to students, teachers, and future researchers who are expected to help in using the six dimensions of SRLS. First, based on the

findings of this study, students should be aware of the importance of the six dimensions of SRLS for academic success. By implementing all of the strategies, students can optimize their learning process and achieve greater academic success. Second, this study can be useful for teachers with students who have different backgrounds such as working and non-working students. Teachers can adjust the way they teach for each student to their needs when learning. Then lastly, the researcher wants to provide several suggestions for future research. First, recruiting only two participants carries the risk of bias and lacks breadth in obtaining results. Therefore, future research is encouraged to recruit more participants so that findings from similar studies can produce better and more varied findings. The use of documents as an instrument in this research also does not cover all aspects of the six dimensions of SRLS. Future research should use more complete documents and more comprehensive data collection.

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