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## **Dealing with Teaching Language via Appropriate Critical Thinking**

**Muthana Mohammed Badie**

Lecturer Assistant Professor

Tikrit University – College of Education for Women

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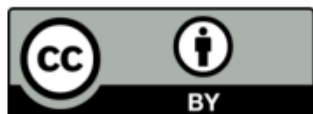
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**Corresponding author:****Muthana Mohammed Badie****Email:**[muthana\\_albazi@tu.edu.iq](mailto:muthana_albazi@tu.edu.iq)

### **Aabstract**

Developing critical thinking skills and critical thinking disposing in college students has been set as fundamental goal in higher education. Recently it has become more prompt in applying this goal to improve students' employability in the fast- changing work place. This study achieved the competency of developing critical thinking through reading. Critical thinking includes the component skills of analyzing arguments, making inferences using inductive or deductive reasoning, judging or evaluating, and making decisions or solving problems. Background knowledge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for enabling critical thought within a given subject. Critical thinking involves both cognitive skills and dispositions. These dispositions, which can be seen as attitudes or habits of mind, include open and fair-mindedness, motivation, creativity, flexibility, a tendency to seek reason, a desire to be well- informed, and a respect for and willingness to entertain diverse viewpoints. Instructors are urged to provide explicit instruction in critical thinking, to teach how to transfer to new contexts, and to use cooperative or collaborative learning methods and constructivist approaches that place students at the center of the learning process. Goals or reasons differ according to personal needs and it is clear that one should learn further to do so. However, the grammar rules and vocabulary knowledge are not enough to master the language and reach such goals. This is due to the fact that successful language learning requires cognitive processes like other types of learning. In other words, thinking, reasoning and critical thinking are major parts of making sense of the new information which help students learn effectively.

**Keywords:** *Critical thinking, reasoning, solving problems.*



## التعامل مع تدريس اللغة من خلال التفكير النقدي المناسب



ا.م. مثنى محمد بدع  
جامعة تكريت / كلية التربية للبنات

### المستخلص:

لقد تم وضع تطوير مهارات التفكير النقدي والتصرف في التفكير النقدي لدى طلاب الجامعات كهدف أساسي في التعليم العالي. وفي الآونة الأخيرة، أصبح تطبيق هذا الهدف أكثر سرعة لتحسين إمكانية توظيف الطلاب في مكان العمل سريع التغير. وتوصلت هذه الدراسة إلى كفاءة تنمية التفكير الناقد من خلال القراءة. يشمل التفكير الناقد المهارات المكونة لتحليل الحجج، واستخلاص الاستنتاجات باستخدام التفكير الاستقرائي أو الاستنتاجي، والحكم أو التقييم، واتخاذ القرارات أو حل المشكلات. تعتبر المعرفة الأساسية شرطاً ضرورياً ولكنها ليست كافية لتمكين التفكير النقدي في موضوع معين. يتضمن التفكير النقدي كلاً من المهارات والميول المعرفية. تتضمن هذه التصرفات، التي يمكن اعتبارها اتجاهات أو عادات ذهنية، الانفتاح والإنصاف، والتحفيز، والإبداع، والمرونة، والميل إلى البحث عن العقل، والرغبة في الحصول على معلومات جيدة، والاحترام والرغبة في الترفيه عن التنوع. وجهات النظر. يتم حث المدربين على تقديم تعليمات واضحة في التفكير النقدي، وتعليم كيفية الانتقال إلى سياقات جديدة، واستخدام أساليب التعلم التعاوني أو التعاوني والأساليب البنائية التي تضع الطلاب في مركز عملية التعلم. تختلف الأهداف أو الأسباب وفقاً للاحتياجات الشخصية ومن الواضح أنه يجب على المرء أن يتعلم المزيد للقيام بذلك. ومع ذلك، فإن القواعد النحوية ومعرفة المفردات ليست كافية لإتقان اللغة والوصول إلى هذه الأهداف. ويرجع ذلك إلى حقيقة أن تعلم اللغة الناجح يتطلب عمليات معرفية مثل أنواع التعلم الأخرى. بمعنى آخر، يعد التفكير والاستدلال والتفكير النقدي أجزاء رئيسية لفهم المعلومات الجديدة التي تساعد الطلاب على التعلم بفعالية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التفكير الناقد، الاستدلال، حل المشكلات.

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## Introduction

Educators have long been aware of the importance of critical thinking skills as an outcome of student learning, more recently, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills has recognized critical thinking as one of several knowledge and invention skills necessary to make pupils for post-secondary education and the workers, In totaling, the newly shaped Public Core State Ideals reproduce critical thinking as a cross-disciplinary ability energetic for college and engagement, In spite of extensive credit of its standing, there is a distinguished lack of agreement concerning the definition of critical thinking.

Learners should know how it use the skills or strategies of the critical thinking the students may resort to their past learning habit, experience or knowledge to solve problem in new situations. The significant problem facts by student cannot be solved in same level of thinking. However, the main goal of education is learning to think this learner need to promote and learn to fruitfully critical thinking skills to their educational student and the complicated difficulties that they look in their profession, and the critical selections they faced to brand because of the data blast to their quick technical changes.

This study aims at developing the idea of critical thinking both learners and graduated student, and encouraging students to thinking critical as the main goal of education is learning to think.

Critical thinking refers to the development and application of interrelated cognitive and meta-cognitive skills involved in solving problems, understanding and expressing meaning, identifying relationships, assessing credibility of statements, identifying elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions, presenting the results of one's own reasoning coherently and self-consciously monitor one's own cognitive actions, and comprises the development of habits of mind (Costa & Kallick,2009).

### Language Teaching:

Every pupil should have an effective skill of critical thinking, and they must not accept anything for granted but how can you teach thinking critically to students? There are several ways of organizing for instruction in critical thinking: We can teach a separate course or unit, we can infuse critical thinking into all that we teach, or we can use a mixed approach. The first approach of a separate course or unit requires materials that teach specifically for critical

thinking dispositions, skills, and knowledge. The downside is that there may be little transfer from what the program or materials teach to the rest of the curriculum. Infusion, the second possible approach, requires that critical thinking be taught as an integral part of all subject areas (Wright, 2002). According to Hirose (1992) employers complain about employees' lack of reasoning and critical thinking abilities. Those abilities are essential because compared with the jobs in the past the modern work environment requires more thinking and problem solving abilities. This situation can be adapted to education, too. Teachers had better be equipped with high critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is not equal with intelligence and shouldn't be misunderstood with it. Critical thinking is skill which can be developed , it can be searched and analyzed with its different dimensions, so this shows that many scientists or experts hypothesize about critical thinking, because the vitality of critical thinking has been realized by many people recently. Educators are aware of the fact that critical thinking can be thought. (Elder&Paul,1994)

### **The Concept of Critical Thinking :**

The word "critical" is derived from the Greek word 'Kritikos' meaning to judge; then this word passed to Latin language as 'Criticus' meaning discrimination and making judgments. According to the Oxford Online Dictionary Critical Thinking (CT) is "the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment".

However, CT is credited to John Dewey, the American philosopher, psychologist and educator, who is widely regarded as the 'father' of the modern CT tradition. He calls it 'reflective thinking' and defines it as "Active, persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds which support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1910: 6). By 'active' Dewey means that the person should think about things and issues himself, be independent thinker, ask questions and try to find solutions and does not only rely on others' ideas and information in a passive way. The most important point in Dewey's definition is "grounds which support it" which means that there must be logical, and sound reasons behind what we believe. Moreover, (Elder & Paul, 1994: 34) view CT as individuals' ability to control their own thinking and develop appropriate criteria and standards for analyzing their own thinking.

According to (Browne & Keely, 2015) CT can be used either for defending or evaluating and revising initial beliefs. The difference between them is shown in Richard Paul's distinction between weak sense and strong-sense of CT where weak-sense CT is for defending current beliefs whereas strong sense of CT is for evaluating claims and beliefs, "especially your own". Another way of the distinction between defending and evaluating is the difference between open-mindedness and close-mindedness. When one is closed-minded s/he will stick to her/his own beliefs, and when one is open-minded s/he respects the opinions and beliefs that differ from his/her own and welcome criticism (ibid).

According to (Ennis, 1985: 45) defines CT as a "Reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do". This definition views CT as a focused logical thinking which leads to the right decision and beliefs. More recently, (Facione, 2000, 61) supports Ennis's definition of CT and views it as "judging in a reflective way what to do or what to believe".

A closer look to the definitions mentioned above gives a sense to claim that characteristics of CT are basically related to the features of people who think critically. For example, being active thinkers who can think independently, being open-minded, analyze different points of view, make syntheses, evaluate and judge logically and do not accept things as they are. According to (Bowell & Kemp, 2010: 5), developing ability to analyze attitudes and strategies of persuasion can result in being able to realize whether they are giving logical and acceptable arguments or not which, in turn, liberates from accepting what is being said or written without presenting logical reasons.

### **However, the nature and scope of teaching CT is controversial. On**

the one hand, some scholars believe that CT is domain specific or subject specificity which is credited to (Ennis, 1985: 4) in his research "Critical Thinking and Subject Specificity: Clarification and Needed Research" in which he believes that CT is a subject within a specific domain. In light of this, (McPeck, 1990: 11) argues that thinking is wide and cannot be limited to a number of skills that can be applied on all contexts fairly.

On the other hand, other scholars believe in the general view of CT. For example, (Halpern, 1998: 277) provides evidence that CT can be taught separately through designing a course for developing students' thinking by teaching them thinking skills. This is concluded by the positive results of his

research regarding that CT skills can be improved as a result of thinking-skills instruction far from domain specific limits. Furthermore, (Gelder, 2005: 43) argues that CT is general in nature and should be learned in order to be practised in different domains. He clarifies that it is not possible to transfer CT skills that have been learned in one domain into other domains rather, students need to learn these skills separately in order to be able to transfer their knowledge of these skills into other domains.

### **Literature Review of critical Thinking:**

According to Dewey (1934:192), thinking is a skill that requires intellectual competency. Experience plays a vital role, as a lack of experience is frequently considered as sufficient grounds for the development of thinking. Experience enables people to respond generally to familiar situations. Dewey (1934:192) finds that learners should be exposed to genuine settings of experience that provide an opportunity to determine their interests in the learning activity that is provided. In technology, an authentic problem should be developed by teachers within a prescribed context to provoke thinking. Learners are provided with ill-structured technological problems that provide a sense of incompleteness due to ill-structured design uncertainty. This challenges learners to apply their minds by seeking information and developing solutions to these technological problems. One of the promoters of Dewey's philosophy, Ratner (1939:837), describes thinking as "The maximum of reasonable certainty and the mind seizes upon the nearest or most convenient instrument of dismissing doubt and re-attaining security." This description indicates that in solving ill-structured technological problems, the first positive ideas that learners conceptualize stimulate them to construct their thoughts with confidence. During investigation, once learners are able to gather the applicable information and determine the manner in which the gathered information connects to key concepts, then learners develop insight to seek the technological solution (DBE, 2011:68).

Ratner (1939:837) describes thinking as an occurrence of uncertainty being experienced that incites personal belief. The purpose of thinking is to develop knowledge and establish an unwavering state of equilibrium. In the event of doubt (uncertainty), the mind snatches the most suitable instrument that terminates uncertainty and retains assertion. Moreover, thinking is the comprehensive search for solutions and requires the thinker to develop a

structured method of inquiry. The process of thinking pursues potentials by making reference to specific experiences (Ratner, 1939:844).

According to the CAPS document, the design process is considered as the backbone for teaching technology (DBE, 2011:12). The design process is an important cognitive activity that entails the mental structuring of ideas (Visser, 2009:192). Vygotsky's (2006) definition of thinking affirms the importance of connecting ideas in order to seek technological solutions. Vygotsky (2006) reveals that a single idea is not sufficient to activate thinking. This means that technology teachers should support learners to generate an idea and subsequently relate that idea to other ideas until a well-structured thought is constructed.

Rusk (1919:122-123) believes that thinking is a cognitive activity in which ideas are steered towards achieving a particular goal or solving a problem. Moreover, thinking provides human beings with greater freedom of choice and enables them to seek alternative solutions from various ideas that were mentally processed. French and Rhoder (1992:398) view thinking as a cognitive process that is generated by external stimuli, which results in gaining knowledge.

Furthermore, thinking is a mental process wherein ideas are developed and manipulated to achieve a particular solution.

### **The benefits of critical thinking:**

Before we proceed to understand the importance and benefits of critical thinking for students, it is important to understand what critical thinking is. Critical thinking is the mode of thinking about any subject, problem, or content. It skillfully thinks. Later, it implements and inherent those intellectual thoughts upon them. The best part of critical thinking is, it improves the quality of thinking.

It has intellectual values like clarity, sound evidence, precision, good reasons, relevance, consistency, depth, breadth, and fairness.

Critical thinking requires a proper process, it involves skillfully conceptualizing, analyzing different aspects, synthesizing, most importantly evaluating whatever information is gathered, keenly observing all factors, and experiencing the overall view. According to (Choy&Cheah,2009):

### **1] It helps to improve decision making**

Critical thinking will let you make decisions by yourself. It will help you improve decision-making. For students, while making career decisions or making a new career move, it is crucial to make quick decisions, and hence critical thinking plays a vital role here.

### **2] Enhances problem-solving ability**

Problem-Solving is the key skill required for adapting to changes and facing challenges. This skill of critical thinking should be developed by students to avoid making any situation complex and help find a solution to it.

### **3] Refine your research skills**

Critical Thinking will refine your research skills, moreover will help you research accurately by observing, analyzing, synthesizing, and experimenting with every aspect in detail for a better result.

### **4] Polishes your creativity**

It will help you polish your creative side. Creativity unquestionably defines itself as a requisite skill in the collaborative modern workforce. As critical thinking will surely polish your creativity.

### **5] Stimulates Curiosity**

It stimulates curiosity in you to find the right solution for the problem or the subject you are working on. Curiosity will let you dig and delve deeper to get a better result. This factor will let you stay a lifelong learner.





### **Teaching transfer:**

This involves giving students sufficient opportunity to abstract what they did when they engaged in critical thinking. The idea here is to actively decontextualize knowledge by getting students to look for general principles and then to expect or even practice applying those principles to other areas. It might work, recent research on college and graduate students suggests that transfer can be activated and enhanced by generating abstract principles (Perkins and Salomon, 1989).

### **Critical literacy approach history and theory**

The critical literacy is the idea of using literature as a tool for developing critical thinking skills. By developing critical reading and writing skill, students can use critical expression to interpret different types of text. Students will be able to explore social phenomena and affected relationship in order to get tools that encouraged them to explore critically traditional values. The sources of critical literacy are sociocultural view of language, critical philosophy educational sociology, and most structuralist theory. From this ancient Greek tradition emerged the need, for anyone who aspired to understand the deeper realities, to think systematically, to trace implications broadly and deeply, for only thinking that is comprehensive, well-reasoned, and responsive to objections can take us beyond the surface. (Zivkovil, S, 2016)

In the Middle Ages, the tradition of systematic critical thinking was embodied in the writings and teachings of such thinkers as Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica*) who to ensure his thinking met the test of critical thought, always systematically stated, considered, and answered all criticisms of his ideas as a necessary stage in developing them. Aquinas heightened our awareness not only of the potential power of reasoning but also of the need for reasoning to be systematically cultivated and "cross-examined." Of course, Aquinas' thinking also illustrates that those who think critically do not always reject established beliefs, only those beliefs that lack reasonable foundations. In the Renaissance (15th and 16th Centuries), a flood of scholars in Europe began to think critically about religion, art, society, human nature, law, and freedom. They proceeded with the assumption that most of the domains of human life were in need of searching analysis and critique

(Ibid).

### **critical thinking strategies and classroom technology :**

Critical thinking is an essential skill that plays a critical role in a student's academic success and beyond. It involves analyzing information, identifying underlying assumptions and biases, evaluating arguments and evidence, and developing well-reasoned conclusions. Critical thinking enables individuals to make informed decisions, solve problems , and communicate effectively in various settings. Despite its importance, teaching critical thinking can be challenging for educators.

Developing critical thinking skills is essential for students to succeed academically and in their future careers.

First, it encourages deeper learning in a sense that critical thinking involves analyzing information, evaluating arguments, and synthesizing multiple sources of information to form well-reasoned conclusions. By engaging in critical thinking, students are encouraged to delve deeper into a subject and explore it from multiple perspectives, leading to a deeper understanding of the material.

Second, it fosters creativity and innovation among learners. Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and thinking creatively to develop new ideas and solutions to problems. By developing critical thinking skills, students are better equipped to think outside the box and come up with innovative solutions to complex problems.

Third it develops effective communication skills in different settings. Critical thinking involves the ability to effectively communicate ideas and arguments to others. By developing critical thinking skills, students are better equipped to articulate their thoughts and ideas in a clear, concise, and persuasive manner, both in writing and speaking.

Fourth, it prepares students for the real world and how to cope with real life situations. In today's complex and rapidly changing world, critical thinking skills are essential for success in the workplace and in everyday life. Employers are looking for individuals who can think critically, solve problems, and make informed decisions. By developing critical thinking skills, students are better prepared for the challenges they will face in the real world. Fifth, it fosters independent thinking and the state of adopting an opinion and stance. Critical thinking involves the ability to question assumptions and challenge ideas. By

developing critical thinking skills, students are encouraged to think independently and develop their own opinions based on evidence and sound reasoning.

In summary, critical thinking is essential for student success in education and beyond. By incorporating strategies for promoting critical thinking in the classroom, educators can provide their students with the necessary skills to succeed academically and in their future careers.

(Facione, P.A.,1990)



According to (Halpern,D.F.,1998), Critical thinking can be taught during:

1. **Lectures** you could immediately train a vital questioning standards in your college students at some point of lecture, however this is neither required nor really helpful, but present this is the sort of manner that scholars could be recommended to suppose critically about it. that is completed in the course of lecture with the aid of questioning the students in approaches that require that they no longer best take in the material, but can examine it and use it on new conditions.
2. **Laboratories** college students unavoidably practice critical questioning all through laboratories in science class, because they may be getting to know the medical technique.

3. **Homework** Both traditional analyzing homework and unique written hassle units or questions can be used to decorate critical questioning. Homework provides many possibilities to encourage crucial questioning.

4. **Quantitative Exercises** Mathematical sporting events and quantitative phrase issues educate trouble fixing skills that can be used in regular lifestyles. This obviously complements important thinking.

5. **Term Papers** The best way to teach critical thinking is to require that students write. Writing forces students to prepare their mind, think of and plan their topic, compare their records in a logical style, and gift their conclusions in a persuasive manner. Accurate writing is an example of appropriate important thinking.

6. **Exams** Exam questions may be devised which sell critical questioning in place of rote memorization that is real for both essay question assessments and more than one-choice assessments Your challenge, if making a decision to simply accept it, is to apply one or more of the following school room techniques or strategies to educate important thinking in a single or extra of the above 4 direction regions. you're advocated To discover the opportunities and use as many as you want. if you are already the use of a number of those strategies, and many of your, then you definitely do now not need to trade a factor.

7. **Enhancing the Surroundings.** concerning the bodily layout of the school room, two hints may be provided. First, if seating is arranged so that scholars share the "level" with the teacher and all can see and have interaction with each other. second, visual aids in the classroom can inspire ongoing interest to critical concept methods.

### **critical thinking in the context of the ESL classroom:**

As noted earlier, critical thinking is an oft-used phrase in classroom settings. Adult learners are encouraged to develop these skills and practice them situationally. Critical thinking means reviewing the ideas produced, making a tentative decision about what action will best solve the problem or what belief about the issue is most reasonable, and then evaluating and refining that solution or belief (Ruggiero, 2012). The effects of developing

keen problem solving skills cannot be understated. Problem solving skills have the potential to impact individuals more immediately and often with ramifications for the future. Those who attend to the notion of improving these skills are characterized in some important ways listed in the table below as posited by Ruggiero, 2012). Acknowledging that critical thinking is an important skill is fundamental. Critical thinking can be taught and should be taught in a directed manner providing students with practice while evaluating and testing ideas. Critical thinking is not a natural byproduct of taking college courses, even courses whose subject matter necessitate critical thinking for success. In *Developing Critical Thinkers*, (Lewis & Smith, 1993:81) emphasizes that “a willingness to risk experimentation in one’s teaching is an important aspect of modeling change and promoting critical openness in learners”. To that end, educators influence whether a student will learn critical thinking skills in their academic journey.

### **Relationship of critical thinking to other concepts**

#### **Metacognition**

Metacognition is thinking about thinking. Metacognitive talents are typically conceptualized as an interrelated set of competencies for gaining knowledge of and thinking, and consist of a number of the skills required for lively learning, essential questioning, reflective judgment, hassle fixing, and choice-making. Adults whose metacognitive skills can regulate their emotions (even in hard conditions), deal with complexity, and address conflict.

According to (Flavell, 1979) metacognition is a directing scheme that contains (a) information, (b) proficiencies, (c) aims, and (d) plans. Metacognitive information is deposited information Or politics around (1) oneself and others by way of mental managers, (2) jobs, (3) movements or plans, and (4) in what way all these cooperate toward touch the effect of slightly intelligent responsibility.

#### **Creativity**

There are many relationships between critical thinking and creativity. (Paul & Elder, 1994) claims that definite quantity of creativeness is important for critical ideas, note that both critical thinking and creativity are aspects of "good" useful thinking and two sides in the same good thinking requires the person to be aware, strategic, and critical about the quality of those intellectual products. Critical thinking without creativity reduce to more doubt and passively, that the

two principles are complexly connected and expand in parallel. Perkins shows that creative thinking and critical questioning are not completely unbiased; inside the system of accurate critical questioning, there's creative wondering and innovative thinking offers with important improvement and stepped forward final results.

## **Motivation**

Motivation explains the motive why people do a particular issue, makes them hold doing it, and helps them to complete the project. A motivation idea is used to provide an explanation for an person's preference to behave, behaviour path, behaviour intensity, and a real accomplishment or real achievement (Pintrich, 2008). (Smith, R,2008) said that someone's trade depended on his/ her motivation to contain inside the change method itself. gaining knowledge of motivation specializes in a cognitive reaction, along with a tendency of college students to obtain meaningful and beneficial educational hobby and to gain advantages from the interest (Santrock, 2007; Brophy, 2004). students, who've studying motivation, can pay careful interest to the lesson, examine material with a purpose to understand the content material and use diverse supported learning techniques. besides, students will also involve in studying sports, have a interest, locate associated sources to realize a particular topic, and achieve the given assignments.

## **Conclusion**

The realization of critical thinking skills and meaning in English Language Teaching is worth doing to improve students' English competence. Those two important elements can be incorporated in English lessons as long as teachers do collaborative activities providing students sufficient exposure to thinking process and meaning negotiation. The variety of classroom activities does not only provide students 'communicative competence, but also create lively learning atmosphere. Indeed, this is not an easy task because the teachers have to make sure that the English lesson, involving both critical thinking skills and meaning, is reasonably inter-related and suitable to the level and needs of their students.

By integrating learning and critical thinking, students' engagement on the subject matter can be improved. During the process of initiating critical thinking, exploratory task is utilized and it has a close connection with reflection as it

encourages students to think independently (Bean, 2011). The importance of critical thinking should be highlighted through the curriculum. Bringing critical thinking in classrooms is beneficial as it deals with real life situations. As a whole, critical thinking should be started from a young age which would enable students to cultivate creative and critical thinking through-out their studies. On the long run, students would be able to use their critical thinking in their working life. By using critical thinking and structured controversy, students' curiosity for searching for solutions to the problem will be sparked, engaging them in active learning that will help develop their understanding and appreciation of diverse points of views. It also requires students to use complex reasoning and critical thinking skills. As a result, students are exposed to a greater range of ideas that will help them to generate creative solutions and new conclusions to their controversial problem. Thus, it shifts students' way of thinking to a higher level and promotes better learning.

Thinking critically means taking a stand for yourself, is also about sense discovery and excitement not only about learning but evaluating arguments to see how they stand up ,by using these techniques, you find yourself becoming a clearer better thinker.

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