

An Analysis of Text Organization and Grammatical Errors in Writing English Descriptive Text for Students in PKBM Eif Course

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to analyze the text organization and grammatical errors in descriptive writing. This research used qualitative method. The instruments used were writing test and interview with the tutor. Data analysis techniques used were data reduction, display, drawing and verifying conclusion. The researchers are guided by the generic structures of descriptive text for analyzing the text organization. To analyze the grammatical errors, the researchers used the Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The results showed that most students have been able to write the identification part well, but there was one student who did not write this part correctly. The description section showed that only about 9 (39%) of students were able to structure the description from general to specific, according to the rules of descriptive text. However, 14 (61%) of students wrote the description section in an unorganized manner. Some students also wrote incomplete descriptions, omitting important elements such as physical characteristics or unique attributes. The results of grammatical errors analysis showed that misformation error is the most common type of error which reaches 57.14%. Omission error occupies the second position at 23.9%, addition error at 12.03%, and the lowest is misordering error at 6.77%.

Keywords: Text Organization; Grammatical Errors; Writing; Descriptive Text

INTRODUCTION

In English teaching and learning, one of the English language skills that students need to master is writing. Writing is a skill that needs a lot of attentions because it is a difficult skill to be practiced. This is supported by opinion from Khakim (2021) in (Dhananjaya et al., 2024) that the most difficult skill to be mastered is writing. Writing becomes particularly challenging as it demands strong grammar mastery to construct clear and accurate sentences that effectively convey the intended message. Harmer (2015:22) states that grammar can be generally defined as a knowledge of what words can go where and what form these words should take (Ly, 2023). Students generally struggle to understand grammar. These difficulties in understanding and applying grammar rules often manifest in various grammatical errors in students' writing, which can significantly impact the clarity and effectiveness of their written communication. Grammatical error is a term of error in grammar. Grammatical errors are thought to be errors made by students when they are learning a language since they are unable to comprehend the language's guidelines (Widyasari et al., 2022). Students' difficulties in understanding and applying these grammatical rules are often seen in their various writings, including descriptive text. In writing descriptive texts, understanding proper grammar is key as this text requires the use of present tense and correct sentence structure to describe objects accurately and effectively.

According to Anderson and Anderson (2003) in (Şaşmaz & Çifci, 2023), descriptive text is a text that describes a specific person, location, or object. It is important to encourage students to learn descriptive writing so that they can describe any object in their surroundings. Mastering descriptive writing can be found not only in the school but also in *PKBM*. *PKBM* (*Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat*) or community learning activity center is non-formal education. Coombs & Ahmed (1974) in (Johnson & Majewska, 2022) say that non-formal education conducted outside of the official system to target specific demographics, including adults and children. *PKBM* Eif Course, as one of the community learning activity centers, applies this non-formal education system to provide affordable English learning services for various groups of people. In learning descriptive text, students are expected to achieve the learning outcomes namely composing the descriptive texts both oral and written, related to people, animals, and objects, with attention to social functions, text structure, and linguistic elements. While, based on the result of interview with the tutor on November 2nd 2024 the reality shows that there are many errors found in students' writing of descriptive text. The first issue lies in their understanding of text organization, where students struggle to differentiate between orientation and description paragraphs. Students demonstrate considerable difficulty in understanding the fundamental components of descriptive text structure, particularly in distinguishing between different paragraph functions within their writing. This organizational confusion manifests as a lack of coherent structure where students fail to maintain clear focus on their descriptive objectives. The resulting texts often lack the detailed, systematic descriptions that are essential for effective descriptive writing, instead presenting fragmented information without proper sequencing or logical flow. The second significant problem relates to language usage, particularly in their command of grammar. Students consistently struggle with basic grammatical constructions, including subject-verb agreement, proper verb tense usage, and appropriate adjective placement within sentences. These grammatical deficiencies significantly impact the clarity and readability of their descriptive texts, undermining their ability to convey clear and accurate descriptions of their chosen subjects. This research is relevant to the study that was conducted by (Annisa, 2023) who analyzed the students' grammatical errors in descriptive text writing at SMP Negeri 3 Natar. According to the study's findings, students made mistakes in every category of surface strategy taxonomy, including misordering, addition, omission, and misformation. Another research is conducted by (Arisman, 2023) investigated the student most commonly makes grammatical errors when writing descriptive texts. When writing descriptive texts, students make the following errors in noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, and adverb phrases. And the author discovers that the majority of the students' grammatical mistakes were in noun phrases. These two studies explained the errors made by students in writing descriptive texts grammatically. However, a good understanding of grammar does not guarantee that students are able to write descriptive text correctly. According to Brown (2001) in (Purnamasari et al., 2021) the following categories of English descriptive text indicators namely: mechanics, vocabulary, grammar, content, and organization. In this case, the researchers highlights the organization in the descriptive text which is part of the problem found by the researchers. So, this study focuses on analyzing the errors in students' descriptive text writing not only grammatically but also in writing the correct text organization.

METHOD

To conduct this research, the researchers used qualitative research approach. According to Cleland (2017) in (Oranga & Matere, 2023) qualitative research uses a methodically predetermined set of procedures to find answers to research questions and aims to understand people's experiences in a straightforward, easy, and analytical manner. Orange & Matere (2023) further explain that qualitative studies are strong because they can give detailed, textual

explanations of how and why people experience particular phenomena. According to (Taherdoost, 2022) new ideas, insights, and theories can be produced by the qualitative method. Based on the explanation provided, a qualitative research is a methodological approach that uses systematic and structured procedures to understand human experiences and phenomena in a deep, analytical, and comprehensive manner. This method has the strength to produce detailed textual explanations of how and why individuals experience certain phenomena, as well as the capacity to develop new ideas, insights, and theories.

Variables of the Research

According to (Ofem & Mchi, 2023) a characteristic or quantity of a phenomenon under study is called a variable. In addition to measuring physical attributes like height, weight, distance, hair color, and income level, variables can also measure abstract ideas like security level, wellbeing, anxiety, IQ, self-esteem, and sense of religion. Due to the dearth of appropriate quantitative measuring tools or just the intrinsically qualitative character of the data being examined, categorical or qualitative variables are frequently found in research and data analysis (Hernandez, 2021).

In this research, the variables used can be categorized into:

1. Students' errors in writing descriptive text
2. Students' Writing Sheet
3. The students in *PKBM Eif* Course

Source of Data

The primary sources of data include writing test, where students' written English descriptive texts assessed to identify students' errors. Complementing interview with a tutor, allowing for a deeper understanding of the instructional strategies, challenges faced in teaching grammar, and insights into the students' writing processes. This focused approach provides valuable perspectives on the reasons behind the students' errors observed in the students' work. Additionally, document analysis employed to review existing materials related to the students' writing. Together, these sources provide a holistic understanding of the errors in students' writing and the underlying factors contributing to these errors.

Instrument of the Research

It is expedient that data be gathered using the appropriate instruments in order to improve the caliber of research findings (Adosi, 2020). The instruments used in this research:

- a. Writing Test
 1. Give an English descriptive text writing test.
 2. Relevant descriptive text topics (describing person, places, and things).
- b. Interview
Interview with tutor to find out student difficulties.

Data Collecting Technique

Three main data collecting techniques employed for this research:

a. Writing test

A writing test that administered where students are given the times to write descriptive texts about specific topics such as describing a person, place, or object. This test conducted under controlled conditions with clear instructions about length and content requirements.

b. Interview

Interview that conducted with a tutor focusing on the observations of students' common errors in descriptive writing, along with the teaching experiences and strategies in

addressing these issues. These interviews are recorded with permission and transcribed for analysis.

c. Document analysis

Document analysis that performed by examining students' descriptive writing, systematically reviewing their work to identify and analyze patterns of errors in descriptive text writing.

These three techniques worked together to provide comprehensive data, enable triangulation of findings, and support the validity of the research through multiple data sources.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is the process of methodically looking through and organizing the interview transcripts, and other materials you simply gather in order to present what you have found to others and to deepen your own understanding of them (Bodgan & Biklen in Sugiyono, 2015 in Annisa, 2023). Miles & Huberman (2014) in (Rahayu, 2023) stated that there are three steps to analyze the data, namely:

d. Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of choosing, focusing, streamlining, abstracting, or changing the data. The data in this case is empirical data obtained from the field, namely students' writing test and interview. In this step, the researchers collected the students' writing test results and interview transcripts with tutors. The researchers selected the parts that are relevant to the research focus, namely organization errors and grammatical errors. Categorized the types of organization errors and grammatical errors found in students' descriptive writing and then simplified the raw data into more organized and easily analyzed data.

e. Data Display

Data display is a systematic, streamlined method of information collection that enables us to make decisions. In this research, the researchers compiled the results of the identification of organization and grammatical errors in the form of tables. The researchers classified errors based on its types and display the percentage or frequency of occurrence of each type of error. The data from interview with tutor is presented in the form of easy-to-understand explanations.

f. Drawing and Verifying Conclusion

Conclusions are drawn and verified with brief explanations that refer back to the data found in the field, in this case the students' writing test and interview. Based on the data analysis, the researchers drew conclusions and offered recommendations. In this final step, the researchers identified patterns or tendencies of errors that appear most often.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researchers instructed the students to do the writing test on the sheet provided. The test given to the students was to write a descriptive text with a title that could be different from one another. The students' writing tests were collected by the researchers and used for analysis. After going through data reduction, there were 23 students' writing tests that were analyzed. Based on the students' writing test, the researchers analyzed the errors contained in the students' descriptive text writing which focuses on the organization of the text and grammar usage.

a. Text Organization

To analyze text organization in students' descriptive writing, the researchers is guided by the generic structure of descriptive text. There were two generic structures of descriptive text, namely identification and description. The data obtained from the analysis of 23 descriptive texts written by *PKBM* Eif students. It can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Analysis Results of Text Organization in Students' Descriptive Writing

Item	Students	Text Organization Analysis
1.	ACG	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of the subject is not well organized.
2.	AB	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of the subject is not well organized.
3.	BJLN	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. d. The description of the subject is not well organized.
4.	CON	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
5.	CGS	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of the subject is not well organized.
6.	DL	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of the subject is not well organized.
7.	ESJML	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information.

Item	Students	Text Organization Analysis
		<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
8.	EEM	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
9.	EG	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
10.	ELL	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. d. The description of the subject is not well organized.
11.	EKT	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
12.	FAL	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
13.	INH	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral trait, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of the subject is not well organized.
14.	IJM	<p>Identification:</p>

Item	Students	Text Organization Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
15.	JDL	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
16.	JNM	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is typically organized in order of significance from general to specific.
17.	JBAM	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. <p>Supporting sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The physical characteristics is none mentioned. b. It provides qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. c. The description of the subject is not well organized.
18.	MPJL	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides the general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal feature, and unique attributes. b. The description of the subject is not well organized.
19.	NANZ	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject b. It provides the general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It provides the physical characteristic, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is not well organized.
20.	PBH	<p>Identification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It introduces the subject. b. It provides the general information. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. d. The description of subject is not well organized.
21.	RG	<p>Identification:</p>

Item	Students	Text Organization Analysis
		a. It doesn't introduces the subject. b. It provides general information. Description: a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral traits, and personal features. b. The unique attributes is none mentioned. c. The description of subject is not well organized.
22.	RGH	Identification: a. It introduces the topic. b. It provides general information. Description: a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, behavioral traits, personal features, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is not well organized.
23.	SRZ	Identification: a. It introduces the subject. b. I provides general information. Description: a. It provides the physical characteristics, qualities, features, function, and unique attributes. b. The description of subject is not well organized.

Based on the results displayed in Table 1, it was found that most students successfully included the identification component in their writing. In general, this part was well written through the introduction of the subject and the provision of relevant basic information. However, one of the students with the initials RG, did not write the identification correctly in his text. Although there is general information, the subject is not clearly introduced. The quality and organization of the description section varied greatly. Out of 23 students, only about 9 students (about 39%) were able to compose description paragraphs well, namely by organizing information in a structured manner from general to specific. These students were able to describe the physical characteristics first, then proceed to the personal traits or uniqueness of the subject in a coherent and logical manner. In contrast, 14 other students (around 61%) showed poor organization in the description section. The ideas conveyed tended to be random, or not well organized. Then it was found that there were some students who described the subject or object incompletely. For example, the student with the initials JBAM did not mention physical characteristics in the description section. Likewise, the student with the initials RG did not explain the unique attributes in the description section.

b. Grammatical Errors

To identify the types and frequency of grammatical errors in descriptive texts written by the students, the researchers used the Surface Strategy Taxonomy. This taxonomy classifies grammatical errors into four categories, namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. This classification provides a more detailed picture of how students deviate from standardized grammatical rules in English writing. The analysis results of the grammatical errors in descriptive text writings of 23 PKBM Eif Course students are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Number of Students Based Early Mathematical Ability

Item	Students	Omission	Addition	Misformation	Misordering	Total
1.	ACG	5	3	11	3	22

Item	Students	Omission	Addition	Misformation	Misordering	Total
2.	AB	9	1	16	-	26
3.	BJLN	2	2	5	1	10
4.	CON	1	1	6	1	9
5.	CGS	3	2	4	1	10
6.	DL	2	1	3	-	6
7.	ESJML	-	2	-	-	2
8.	EEM	3	-	6	2	11
9.	EG	2	1	5	-	8
10.	ELL	4	3	9	1	17
11.	EKT	1	2	6	1	10
12.	FAL	1	1	10	-	12
13.	INH	3	1	8	-	12
14.	IJM	4	-	2	1	7
15.	JDL	5	2	3	-	10
16.	JNM	1	-	7	2	10
17.	JBAM	2	3	6	-	11
18.	MPJL	3	-	9	1	13
19.	NANZ	2	2	1	1	6
20.	PBH	2	-	8	-	10
21.	RG	2	2	10	-	14
22.	RGH	1	1	5	1	8
23.	SRZ	6	2	12	2	22
Total		64	32	152	18	266
Percentage		23.9%	12.03%	57.14%	6.77%	100%

Based on the previous table (Table 1), it can be seen that 266 grammatical errors were found in the analyzed texts. Misformation errors are the most common type of errors, totaling 152 errors or 57.14% of the total. These errors include the use of improper grammatical forms, such as using the wrong tense, inappropriate subject-verb agreement, or choosing the wrong form of words. The second most common error was omission with a total of 64 errors or 23.9%. These errors occurred because students omitted important elements in the sentence, such as articles, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, subjects, objects or even words that make a sentence incomplete. Addition errors which amounted to 32 errors or 12.03% of the total reflected the tendency of students to add grammatical elements that were not needed in the sentence. This occurred in the use of auxiliary verbs or the improper addition of articles and prepositions. Meanwhile, misordering errors were the least common type of errors, with 18 errors (6.77%). These errors occurred when sentence elements are arranged in an incorrect order. For example, the arrangement of adjectives and nouns are switched, or errors in arranging subjects, predicates, and objects. Further analysis of the individual data showed that there were significant differences in the number of errors made by each student. A student with the initials AB was recorded as the student with the highest number of errors, namely 26 errors, followed by students with the initials ACG and SRZ (22 errors). Both were dominated by misformation and omission errors. On the other hand, student with the initials ESJM only made 2 errors that fall into the addition category.

c. Interview

The aimed to get direct views from the tutor at *PKBM Eif* Course regarding the difficulties faced by students in writing English descriptive texts, both in terms of text organization and grammar. And certainly to answer the third formulation of the problem. The tutor explained that many students have difficulty in composing a complete and logical text. Common errors

in text structure include lack of unity between identification and description sections. In the grammar aspect, the most common errors are the use of wrong verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, and the improper use of articles (a/an/the). To overcome these problems, tutor applied strategies such as explaining text structure through examples and graphic organizers, using peer review, guided writing, and grammar practice. Tutor also used constructive feedback, both in writing with codes (e.g. “VT” for verb tense) and through short individual conferences. According to the tutor, with consistent practice and the right approach, students showed progress in writing slowly. Students' active engagement through group discussions, peer editing, and self-assessment also greatly helped to increase their awareness of errors. Overall, tutor emphasized the importance of combining model texts with writing practice, as well as continuous support and feedback from teachers for students to better understand and apply text structure and grammar in descriptive text writing.

Discussion

According to the findings, it can be interpreted that the majority of students showed a basic understanding of how to apply the identification component. The students are generally familiar with how to begin a descriptive paragraph appropriately. However, a more critical interpretation arises when analyzing the description part. Only approximately 9 students out of 23 (about 39%) were able to organize this section effectively. These students demonstrated an awareness of textual cohesion by ordering their ideas from general to specific. This structured approach reflects a more developed understanding of descriptive writing. In contrast, about 14 students (61%) struggled to compose a well-organized description. Their texts tended to include disjointed ideas, overlapping categories, and inconsistent sequencing. This disorder in idea presentation indicates that many students lack sufficient guidance or practice in logically structuring descriptive content. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that some students omitted key elements of description. These omissions affect the completeness of the description and suggest partial mastery of the descriptive genre. Another case that was discovered was a student who did not construct the identification properly. Although there was general information, the subject was not clearly introduced, resulting in a failure to fulfill the required structure of a descriptive text. This is not in line with Rusmawan (2017) in (Purnamasari et al., 2021) explained that identification entails outlining the topic's general description as well as the unique qualities of the thing, location, or individual being discussed. Readers are able to recognize the subject in identification.

Analysis of grammatical errors using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy shows that misformation-type errors are the most dominant, accounting for 57.14% of the total errors. These errors included the use of incorrect verb forms, mismatching of subjects and verbs, as well as the selection of inappropriate word forms. This suggests that students have difficulty in applying the correct grammatical form in the writing context. The omission error, which ranks second most frequent, shows that students often omit important elements in the sentence, such as articles, auxiliary verbs, or subjects. This could be due to the influence of first language (L1) or limited understanding of sentence structure. The frequency of this error reflects students' tendency to simplify sentences inappropriately, perhaps due to lack of confidence or limited mastery of grammar. Although addition and misordering errors are fewer in number, their presence still affects the clarity of sentence meaning. Overall, the high number of errors indicates the need for more contextualized teaching of grammar integrated with writing activities.

Based on the writing test and interviewed with tutor, researcher concluded that the factors that cause errors in text organization and grammar in writing English descriptive text consist of:

1. Lack of understanding of descriptive text structure (identification and description).

2. Difficulty developing ideas in a logical and organized manner in a text.
3. Lack of practice using outlines or model texts.
4. Weak mastery of basic grammar, especially simple present tense, subject-verb agreement, and article usage.
5. Lack of awareness of the correct form of grammar, so often mix tenses or incorrect verb forms.
6. Lack of consistent grammar practice and personal reflection on the errors.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that students at *PKBM Eif* Course still face considerable difficulties in organizing the text and applying correct grammar in writing descriptive texts in English. Most students have been able to write the identification part well, but in the description section more students struggled to compose a well-organized description. There were also some students who omitted the elements in the description that should have been used. The students also made the high number of errors in terms of grammar. This indicates the need for more contextualized teaching of grammar integrated with writing activities. Overall, the results of this study show the importance of improving students' understanding of text organization and grammar through structured teaching methods, especially in non-formal learning contexts.

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