

# **SPEECH ACTS USED BY THE HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN “NOT EASILY BROKEN”**

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## **Abstract**

The writer researches the language use of husband and wife in their reconciliation processes and its connection to the reconciliation processes. She uses a film, entitled “Not Easily Broken” (2009) as the representative of reconciliation of husband and wife. She researches the Speech Act of Dave and Clarice during their reconciliation processes. The writer uses the Speech Act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969; Yule, 1996) and the reconciliation process (Huysse, 2003). In the findings of the research, the highest illocution is ‘Representative’ and automatically, the highest perlocution is from ‘Representative’. In the first and second stages, most of the perlocution does not match but in the last stage, all perlocutions match to the illocution and the reconciliation is accomplished. The conclusion is a couple should accept the fact and truth to each other to accomplish reconciliation process.

Key words: speech act, reconciliation, movie, husband and wife

## **BACKGROUND**

People use language as a media in their communication. They use language to express what they need and especially in building relationship to each other. If communication fails, the relationship becomes bad. However, if communication is successful, the relationship becomes good. Hence, language that is used can make relationship good or bad.

In order to research the issue of language use for successful relationship, the writer uses Speech Act. Language can do things; it can perform acts because people share constitutive rules that create the acts and that allow them to label utterances as particular kinds of acts. Austin (1962 in Paltridge, 2006, p.55) distinguished three different acts involved whenever someone says something. They are locutionary acts, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act.

Socially, people speak differently due to their background. It also happens in gendered diversity. Researchers found significant gender differences in interpersonal conflict. Man and woman have different characteristics in communication through language use. The differences can make conflict between man and woman in their relationship, for example husband and wife relationship.

One of the examples of the fail and successful communication between of husband and wife is the film “Not Easily Broken” (2009). The film is mainly about a couple, the husband is David Johnson and the wife is Clarice Johnson. The writer chooses a film for the object of the research because a film can be a model of conversation. As it is stated in Gender and Discourse, “... , artificial dialog may represent an internalized model or schema for the production of conversation – a competence model that speaker has access it” (Tannen and Lakoff, 1994, p.139).

However, it is interesting to pay attention to their language during reconciliation processes and which utterances contribute to the reconciliation. Brounéus’ proposal (2003, p.3) about reconciliation is “a societal process that involves mutual acknowledgment of past suffering and the changing of destructive attitudes and behavior into constructive relationships toward sustainable peace.”

The film is chosen because the reconciliation effort comes from both of sides, the husband and the wife. Hence, the writer can get a representation of reconciliation process between a husband and wife. There are 83 scenes in the film but the writer only uses 9 scenes because the

writer focuses only on husband and wife's reconciliation process so the chosen 9 scenes suit to the criteria of reconciliation process.

The purpose of the study is to reveal the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of David and Clarice in their reconciliation processes. Moreover, the writer wants to find out how the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts contribute to the reconciliation.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Speech Act

Speech act is an action performed via utterance. In this study, the speech acts used are Illocutionary and Perlocutionary. Illocutionary act is what is done in saying whatever has been said (Yule, 1996, p.47). In saying and meaning something by it, a speaker always performs one or more illocutionary acts. The perlocutionary act itself is an accomplishment of saying something (Paltridge, 2006, p. 55). Its division is based on the match and mismatch to the illocution.

Illocutionary acts have certain intention or purpose that are manifested in some functions. There are five categories of (illocutionary) speech acts based on the functions (Yule, 1996, pp.43-54). They are Representative, Directive, Expressive, Commissive, and Declarative.

Representative is the speech act that the speaker believes to be the case or not. The point is to represent a state of affairs so it carries the value of 'true' or 'false'. Directive is the speech act that speakers use to get someone else do something. It is an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, to direct him/her towards some (speaker's) goal. Expressive is the speech act that state what the speaker feels (psychological states). It expresses an inner state of the speaker which is essentially subjective. Commissive is the speech act that the speakers use to commit themselves to some future action. Declarative is the speech act that is when the speaker utters; it brings a new state of being.

### Reconciliation Processes

Ideally, reconciliation builds peace, stops the conflict and strengthens newly established custom. However, reconciliation is not easy to realize in practice. The process is not a linear but there are stages and in each stage, there is still a possibility to have conflict. There are three stages in reconciliation process (Huyse, 2003, pp.19-21). They are replacing fear by non-violent coexistence, building confidence and trust, and towards empathy.

The first stage is Replacing Fear by Non-Violent Coexistence. In this stage, the people who confront each other should throw away the hatred, hostility, and bitterness among them. They are two conditions that are important in this stage. There must be an authority and a safe environment. The second stage is When Fear No Longer Rules: Building Confidence and Trust. There are also finding of the fact and truth that can help the transition from violent conflict to durable peace. The last stage is Towards Empathy. In this stage, people who are related in conflict reveal the truth and the fact that are found in the previous stage. Moreover, people can share the right identity between them and want to unite together.

## METHODS

In this research, the writer use qualitative approach. In collecting the data, the steps are watching the films finding the script by browsing in the internet and editing the script in order to break down the scene, give name and setting to the script, and number the utterance, and filtering scenes which show the reconciliation process. For analyzing the data, the steps are giving number to the utterances that are used by three digits numbering system (scene, person, no. each utterances (1,2,3)), determining the utterances into which reconciliation process' stage, analyzing the utterances to know what illocution and perlocution that are used in the reconciliation process, and grouping illocution and Perlocution of Dave and Clarice, then counting the sum & percentage of them. The formula for counting the illocution and the perlocution

$$\text{is } \frac{\text{The amount of illocution/perlocution}}{\text{Total amount of illocution/perlocution}} \times 100\%.$$

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

- **Illocutionary acts of Dave and Clarice during the different stages**

- **Illocutionary Acts of Dave and Clarice in the first stage**

In the first stage of reconciliation, the highest rank of illocutionary acts is the Representative (62.1%), while the lowest rank is Declarative and Commissive (3.4%). Directive is 24.1% and expressive is 6.9%.

Excerpt 1

45.2.583 Clarice: This scares me, David.<sup>3)</sup>

45.1.584 Dave : What?<sup>2)</sup>

45.2.585 Clarice: This. .... Because I know it's been stressful since the accident, I know.

45.1.586 Dave : No nono. It's been a lot longer than that.<sup>1)</sup>

45.2.587 Clarice: Okay, that's fair. ... ..because it's not like you, David. Can we talk to someone about it, please?

45.1.588 Dave : If that's what you want.<sup>4)</sup>

1) is a **Representative**. It is a Representative because Dave intended the value of false of Clarice's previous utterance of Clarice by saying "No no no ..." and intended the value of truth of the problem by saying "...It's been a lot longer than that.". Here, the function of the illocutionary act can be as a counter argument from Dave about Clarice's statement of fact of their marriage.

2) is a **Directive**. It is a Directive because its intention is expressing what speaker wants the interlocutor to do something. Dave's utterance is a question so its intention is directing the interlocutor (Clarice) to give an answer.

3) is **Expressive**. It is Expressive because its intention is expressing **fear** that the speaker feels about the silence between them in their marriage.

4) is a **Commissive**. It is a Commissive because it intends the speaker's future action. The utterance's intention of Dave is **promising** Clarice to talk to someone about their marriage together.

Excerpt 2

46.1.602 Dave : That's honest.

46.2.603 Clarice : Please, that's David being dramatic.

46.3.604 Bishop : Clarice.

46.2.605 Clarice : You should get an award for that one.<sup>5)</sup>

5) is a **Declarative** because it intends to bring a new state of being. The utterance's intention is mocking Dave because his action is dramatic according to Clarice.

- **Illocutionary Acts of Dave and Clarice in the second stage**

In the second stage of Reconciliation, the highest rank is Representative (40.8%) and the lowest rank is Commissive (11.3%). Directive is 35.2% and Expressive is 12.7%. There is no Declarative that happens here.

Excerpt 3

52.2.703 Clarice : Hi. You didn't notice the candles?

52.1.704 Dave : Reesie, I—<sup>3)</sup>

52.2.705 Clarice : Come on, baby. You remember the candles. When we first got married, they were always my signal.....to let you know I was gonna put something on you.... ....

52.1.706 Dave : You don't have to do this

52.2.707 Clarice : Baby, we need this. I sent Mama on a long errand, so she won't be back for a long time.<sup>1a)</sup>...Like you said, it's time for us to get back....to the loving part of our marriage.<sup>1b)</sup> ....

52.1.708 Dave : Stop.

52.2.709 Clarice : Are you sleeping with her?

52.1.710 Dave : What?

- 52.2.711 Clarice : I'm not stupid, David. Are you sleeping with Julie?  
 52.1.712 Dave : No, I'm not sleeping with her.  
 52.2.713 Clarice : Well, then, what is it? What--? Since when have you had to take phone calls outside? What are all the phone calls about, anyway? David, what's happening? Tell me the truth.<sup>2)</sup>

**1a)** and **1b)** are **Representative** because the speaker intends the value 'true' or 'false'. The '1a)' utterance's intention is stating **the true fact** of sending mom. The '1b)' utterance's intention is agreeing Dave's **past statement experience**. **2)** is **Directive** because it is **questioning** the truth about what happens to Dave, why he takes phone outside. It is shown from 'why' question word. The other intention is a **command** to state the truth behind that so the illocutionary act is Directive. **3)** is a **Commissive** because its intention is **refusal** toward Clarice's invitation of putting something on.

Excerpt 4

- 71.3.786 Mom: Your daddy was rotten. ... He was a nasty bastard.  
 71.2.787 Clarice: Mama—<sup>4)</sup>

**4)** is Expressive because its intention is expressing the **surprise** of Clarice because of mom's statement about dad. The Clarice's intonation became higher.

#### o Illocutionary Acts of Dave and Clarice in the third stage

In the third stage of reconciliation process, the highest rank is Representative (47.1%) and the lowest rank is Expressive (11.8 %). The Directive is 23.5% and Commissive is 17.6%. Declarative does not happen in this stage.

Excerpt 5

- 80.2.845 Clarice: ... I have been round and round with my heart.....and I want you to know two things. First of all, Mama has lost.....all of her voting privileges in this marriage. And, second.....no one ever taught me how to be one of those wives.....who holds onto her man's every word. And no one taught me how to trust him to take care of me, you know? I really don't know if I could ever be that woman<sup>1)</sup>.....but I do want to learn how to be your partner.<sup>4)</sup> And whatever you decide.....I need you to know that I can't live without you<sup>3)</sup>, David. I don't want to live without you and I love you so much.<sup>3)</sup>

- 80.1.846 Dave : Come here. What's that?<sup>2)</sup>  
 80.2.847 Clarice: I heated you up a plate..... ..

**1)** is **Representative** because its intention is **stating the true fact** of their marriage from Clarice's side. She **reports** that she has lost mom's voting privileges, and no one has ever taught her to be a wife who holds onto her man's every word. **2)** is Directive because its intention is **ordering** Clarice to come closer to him. It is shown the using of verb directly without subject. Another intention is **asking** what Clarice brings to Dave, shown from the using of question verb. **3)** Is Expressive because its intention is expressing Clarice's **love** to Dave. **4)** is Commissive because its intention is **promising**, emphasized on the 'do' word. It is a promise to Dave that Clarice does want to learn to be a good partner for Dave.

#### Perlocutionary acts of Dave and Clarice in the First Stage

The highest perlocutionary act in this stage is 'Doesn't: accept/believe/agree the statement, information, etc' (40.7%) and the lowest is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the future action' and 'Doesn't: become like what be declared' (3.7%). 'Doesn't: accept/ believe/agree the future action' and 'Becomes like what be declared' do not happen in this stage.

#### Representative

**Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc (29.6%)**

This perlocutionary act is related to the Representative which matches. An example of it is taken from scene 45.

Excerpt 6

45.2.585Clarice: This. The silence between us.... Because I know it's been stressful since the accident, I know.

45.1.586Dave : No nono. It's been a lot longer than that.

45.2.587Clarice: **Okay, that's fair....** ...because it's not like you, David. Can we talk to someone about it, please?

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Representative because it responds Dave's former statement of disagreement to Clarice. The perlocution matches because Clarice **accepts** Dave's disagreement about the length of their problem. In the beginning, Clarice argues that the problem comes up since the accident but Dave disagrees and Clarice **accepts** it.

- **Doesn't: accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc (40.7%)**

This perlocutionary act is related to the Representative which does not match. An example of it is taken from scene 46.

Excerpt 7

46.2.596Clarice: Mama loves you.

46.1.597Dave: **No, no, she doesn't love me**, she tolerates me. ... But I'm cool with that.

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Representative because it responds Clarice's argument that her mom loves Dave. The perlocution does not match because Clarice's intention to tell Dave that mom loves Dave, **does not affect him to believe** it, Dave **does not believe** it and gave his counter argument about that (...she tolerates me. Because she loves you. But I'm cool with that.).

### Directive

- **Follows/answers (7.4 %)**

It is related to the Directive which matches. An example of it is taken from scene 45.

Excerpt 8

45.2.587Clarice: .....Can we talk to someone about it, please?

45.1.588Dave: **If that's what you want.**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Directive because it responds Clarice's request. The perlocution matches because it affects Dave to **follow** what Clarice wants. Dave promises Clarice to talk to someone. It is shown from the next scene when they go together to see Bishop and talk together.

- **Refuses/doesn't answer (7.4 %)**

It is related to the Directive which does not match. An example of it is taken from scene 46.

Excerpt 9

46.3.590Bishop: Dave, what do you wanna say to Clarice right now?

46.1.591Dave: **(shakes head) I mean, what's the point? You heard her. She has everything figured out, so....**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Directive because it responds Bishop's question. The perlocution does not match because it **does not affect** Dave **to answer** the question, it cannot encourage Dave to open honestly.

### Expressive

- **Doesn't: understand the feelings (7.4 %)**

It is related to the Expressive which does not match. An example of it is taken from scene 45.

Excerpt 10

45.2.583Clarice: This scares me, David.

45.2.584 Dave : **What?**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Expressive because it responds Clarice's expression. The perlocution does not match because it **does not affect** Dave **to understand her feelings**.

### Commissive

- **Accepts/believes/agrees the future action (3.7 %)**

It is related to the Commissive which matches. An example of it is taken from scene 46 on the conversation between them and Bishop.

Excerpt 11

45.2.587 Clarice: ... Can we talk to someone about it, please?

45.1.588 Dave: **If that's what you want.**

The action of it is a part of perlocutionary act of Commissive is because it responds Dave's promise to Clarice. The perlocution matches because the promise affects well for them to meet someone (Bishop) to talk about it in the next scene.

### Perlocutionary acts of Dave and Clarice in the Second Stage

The highest rank in this stage is 'Doesn't: accept/believe/agree the statement, information, etc' (46.1%), while the lowest rank is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the future action' (1.96%). 'Doesn't: understand the feelings', 'Doesn't: accept/ believe/agree the future action', 'Becomes like what be declared', and 'Doesn't: become like what be declared' do not happen in this stage.

### Representative

- **Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc (35.3 %)**

An example of it is taken from scene 52.

Excerpt 12

52.1.714 Dave: Things haven't been right between us and I think we both know that.

52.2.715 Clarice: **I know that.**

The utterance is a part of perlocutionary act of Representative because it responds Dave's argument. The perlocutionary act matches because Dave's argument affects Clarice to **agree** with Dave.

- **Doesn't: accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc (46.1 %)**

An example of it is taken from scene 76.

Excerpt 13

76.3.778 Mom :I'm not having this conversation.

76.2.779 Clarice : Why?

76.3.780 Mom : because my bedroom drama with your Daddy ain't any of your business.

76.2.781 Clarice : **Excuse me? The way you're all up in my marriage? You convinced me to put my husband out of my house. I think it is my business, Mama.**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Representative because it responds mom's reason. The perlocutionary act does not match because mom's reason **does not** affect Clarice to **accept** that reason. She does not accept her mom's reason that mom's marriage does not want to be intervened by Clarice. She gives a counter argument that she thinks that it is her business too because mom intervenes her marriage.

### Directive

- **Follows/answers (5.9 %)**

An example of it is taken from scene 71.

Excerpt 14

66.3.766 Bishop: Has God been the third strand in that cord.....I wrapped around your shoulders all those years ago?

66.2.767 Clarice: **No.**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Directive because it responds Bishop's question. The perlocutionary act matches because Bishop's question affects Clarice to **answer** the question honestly.

- **Refuses/doesn't answer (9.8 %)**

An example of it is taken from scene 52.

Excerpt 15

52.2.703 Clarice: Hi. You didn't notice the candles?

52.1.704 Dave: **Reesie, I—**

52.2.705 Clarice: Come on, baby. You remember the candles...

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Directive because it responds Clarice's invitation to Dave to put something on him. The perlocutionary act does not match because Clarice's invitation affects him to **refuse** her.

### Expressive

- **Understands the feelings (3.9%)**

An example of it is taken from scene 78.

Excerpt 16

78.3.830 Julie: Thank you for coming. ... I--I couldn't have done it.

78.1.831 Dave: **Are you okay?**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Expressive because it responds Julie's gratitude. The perlocutionary act matches because Julie's gratitude affects Dave to **understand her feeling** and asks her news.

### Commissive

- **Accepts/believes/agrees the future action (1.96%)**

An example of it is taken from scene 76.

Excerpt 17

76.2.799 Clarice: .....and I'm gonna have to ask you to leave my house..... I want my husband back, and I want to fight for my marriage. ....

76.3.800 Mom: Little girl. ... I'll be gone when you get back. Go on.

76.2.801 Clarice: **Okay. Okay.**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Commissive because it responds mom's promise ("...I'll be gone when you get back..."). Clarice asks mom to leave her house and mom promises her to go when she gets back. Clarice undertakes mom's promise. She does not argue mom any more but undertakes mom's promise and says it. The perlocutionary matches because Clarice **undertakes** mom's promise.

### Perlocutionary acts of Dave and Clarice in the Third Stage

The highest rank of perlocutionary act in this stage is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc' (54.5%), while the lowest ranks are 'Doesn't: accept/believe/agree the statement, information, etc', 'Follows/answers', 'Accepts/believes/agrees the future action' (9.1%). 'Understands the feelings' is the second highest (18.2%). The other perlocutionary acts do not happen in this stage. All the excerpts in this stage are taken from scene 80.

### Representative

- **Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc (54.5%)**

Excerpt 18

80. 2.843 Clarice: Oh, the manager gave me a key.-I can leave if you--

80. 1.844 Dave: .... That manager would give a key to anybody.

80. 2.845 Clarice: **David, I just need you to let me say some things, okay?...but I do want to learn how to be your partner. And whatever you decide.....I need you to know that I can't live without you, David. I don't want to live without you and I love you so much.**

It is a part of perlocutionary act of Representative because it responds Dave's explanation about the key. In the beginning Clarice feels reluctant to come into Dave's room because she is afraid that she disturbs Dave's privacy but when Dave calms her and explains that the manager indeed gives the key to everybody. She feels being accepted so she closes the door, comes in, and is confident to do what she wants to do. The perlocutionary matches because Dave's explanation about the key affects Clarice to **believe** and be confident to do what she wants to do when she comes to the motel to explain some things about their marriage from her side.

- **Doesn't: accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc (9.1%)**

Excerpt 19

80. 2.849 Clarice: I cooked it.

80. 1.850 Dave : **You cooked it?**

The utterance is a part of perlocutionary act of Representative because it responds Clarice's confession that she cooks the food. The perlocutionary act does not match because Clarice's confession **does not** affect Dave to **believe** who cooks the food.

### Directive

- **Follows/answers (9.1%)**

Excerpt 20

80. 1.846 Dave : Come here. What's that?

80. 2.847 Clarice: **(come closer) I heated you up a plate.....**because you're staying in a roach motel and I wanted you to eat.

The action of coming closer and the utterance is a part of perlocutionary act of Directive because it responds Dave's order and question. The perlocutionary act matches because Dave's illocutionary act affects Clarice to come closer to him and **answer** him.

### Expressive

- **Understands the feeling (18.2%)**

Excerpt 21

80. 1.850 Dave : You cooked it?

80. 2.851 Clarice: Yes.

80. 1.852 Dave :There ain't poison in this, is there?

80. 2.853 Clarice: (laugh) .... ..Hi(**be kissed**).

The action of kissing Clarice after she greets him is a part of perlocutionary act of Expressive because it responds Clarice's greeting. The perlocutionary act matches because Clarice's greeting affects Dave to **understand her feeling** and welcome her greetings. The greetings and the response are aimed to welcome each other after they were in breaking point, and show that they reconcile their relationship, and they are ready to walk together in a new relationship now.

### Commissive

- **Accepts/believes/agrees the future action (9.1%)**

Excerpt 22

80. 2.845 Clarice:...but I do want to learn how to be your partner. ....

80. 1.846 Dave: **Come here. What's that?**

The utterance is a part of perlocutionary act of Commissive because it responds Clarice's promise also. The perlocutionary act matches because it response Clarice's future action ("..but I **do** want to learn...") too. It affects Dave to **undertake** her promise so he receives her. After Clarice promises him to learn to be his partner, Dave does not argue or does not believe but he undertakes her promise and wants to start their relationship again.

### **The Contribution of Illocutionary Acts and Perlocutionary Acts to the Stages of Reconciliation**

Each stage has its own development. In stage one, most of illocutions and perlocutions do not match to each other. In stage two, there is a development. The matching is found not only in Commisive but also in Expressive. In the third stage, all the illocutions match their perlocutions and the reconciliation process is accomplished.

#### **Contribution to the first stage**

Although they try to build their communication, there are still a lot of mismatches. The highest illocutionary act is Representative (62.1%) because in this stage, people who confront try to build new communication so they try to be open and share to each other. Meanwhile, the highest perlocutionary act is from Representative too namely 'Doesn't: accept/believe/agree the statement, information' (40.7%). All expressive does not affect well. All perlocutionary of it is 'Doesn't: understand the feelings'. In the directive, 'Follows/answers' and 'Refuses/doesn't answer' are balance because they still do not find the fact and the truth for their problem so this stage can still have a lot of argumentation between the couple. In the Commisive, the perlocutionary act is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the future action' but it still does not give any effect.

#### **Contribution to the Second Stage**

The mismatch continues in this stage although it begins to decrease. The highest perlocutionary act is still 'Doesn't: accept/believe/agree the statement, information, etc' (46.1%). However, the gap decreases. In this stage, the gap between Representative and its infelicity condition is lower than in previous stage. Directive increases because this stage is the stage that people who confront find the fact and truth, and also strengthens the confidence of each other to support their reconciliation process. The Expressive increases into 12.7% in this stage. The increase of Expressive shows openness to share the feeling.

#### **Contribution to the third stage**

The highest illocution is still Representative (47.1%) but the highest perlocution is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc' (54.5%). Thus, in this stage the development of relationship appears. The gap between 'Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc' and 'Doesn't: accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc' is quite far, (45.4%). Furthermore, other illocutions have also matched their perlocution. The high perlocution of Directive is 'Follows/answers'. In the Expressive side, the high perlocution is 'Understands the feeling'. The last is from the 'Commisive' side. The perlocution of Commisive which happens in this stage is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the future action'. All of perlocutions match so the reconciliation is accomplished.

### **CONCLUSION**

The conclusion is the illocution that is used for reconciliation is Representative. The Representative is the meaning of openness toward fact and truth. The perlocution is of course the felicity one, which is 'Accepts/believes/agrees the statement, information, etc'. It is because the acceptance of the fact and truth to both sides is needed.

The writer suggests trying another case of the problem of a couple. In the next research, it is better to find a different case of problem in marriage or even in other relationship problem because the finding perhaps will be different so the research of language use in reconciliation can be applicable for many problems of marriage or other relationship.

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