

Development and Standardization of Pre-teachers' Language Adjustment Scale (PLAS)

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ABSTRACT

Adjustment has a lot to deal with survival of the sound body and a sound mind. Adjustment has become a thing in the education sector lately, but this wave has frequently overlooked teacher education. Teachers should be competent and self-assured in their teaching in this multilingual population because they play a vital role in the development of the nation. The objective of this article was to develop and standardize a comprehensive scale for checking the level of language-related adjustment problems of pre-service teachers. The dimensions include language-related adjustment problems of pre-service teachers during their training phase both in teaching and academic adjustment. Face, content, and construct validity of the scale was established using expert validation. The score of 0.936 in the internal consistency proved to the scale to be of reliability. The norms of the scale were established using Z-score. It also discussed the administration procedure of the scale.

Keywords Language, Adjustment Scale, Pre-teachers, Scale Standardization

The world now is highly globalized, complex, and intricate. A being is always exposed to diverse communities and cultures throughout the life span. Right from the inception an individual acquires language slowly from family preceded by different socializing agents (Vygotsky, 1978). These socializing agents act as a catalyst to the children's language acquisition thereby developing a multicultural individual who not only feels competent to interact with the dynamic society but also confidently expresses his/ her thoughts with the rest.

According to Mead, language is "the key to the development of the self and the individual's integration into society. Through the use of symbols and linguistic interaction, individuals learn to take on the perspectives of others, enabling them to understand social roles and expectations. Language is not merely a tool for communication; it is the means by which individuals internalize

the collective consciousness of their community. It allows them to adjust to the norms and values of society and actively participate in social interactions, shaping their identity and place within the larger social context" (Morris, 1934).

Pre-teachers and language

Every attempt to define language has not succeeded because it is a very complex human phenomenon. According to popular belief, language is an ordered cacophony that people employ in real social contexts. It is referred to as contextualised systematic sounds for this reason. Establishing contact and communication among community members is crucial. It is established by the constant verbal exchange of ideas and thoughts. Sahoo &

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Kharwar (2023) assert that it is important in figuring out how an individual adjusts.

The active process of learning a language starts at birth and lasts the entirety of a person's life. Command of language in order to build relationships with family and friends, express their ideas, feelings, and experiences, and try to make sense of and order their environment, students acquire language skills through use. They might speak more than one language at school or pick up a second language there. Respecting and enhancing each student's first language is crucial. Learning a language well will help with learning other languages. There is a 15-kilometer language shift. Language acquisition and learning are even more important in this context than other forms of learning. Serving a multilingual population is a laborious task in and of itself. The mother tongue should be used as the first language under the three-language system (Education Commission, 1966). It also suggested developing multilingual local textbooks and curricula that students who have mastered the language could access (Chaudhary, 2014).

The goal of the three-language policy is to facilitate the easy acquisition of multiple languages by first helping learners gain an understanding of the local tongue and then using that understanding as a bridge to develop abstract concepts of other languages. Additionally, it aims to advance multilingualism in India. From the perspectives of administrators, teachers, and students, implementing a three-language policy is a significant challenge for all educational stakeholders.

Adjustment

The concept of Adjustment is as old as humans existing on this earth. An individual learns to adjust to the ever-changing environment right from his inception. The term 'Adjustment' refers to the extent to which an individual's personality functions effectively in society. It means the process of adapting to the conditions in a systematic or good manner so that the needs systematically or well stagnation do not arise therein. As we know, humans are social animals, and they work not only to satisfy their physical needs but also to handle the societal pressure faced. Adjustment is interpreted through two major points of view viz. Adjustment is an achievement and adjustment

as a process. According to Strang & Pansegrouw (1948), "Adjustment is a process and not a state ... adjustment is continuous throughout life." The adjustment process is affected and modified by the individual's experiences; thus, learning plays a significant role in aiding adjustment. Adjustment is continual in which a person varies his behavior to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment. Academic adjustment according to Baker and Syrik (1999) can be defined as "having a positive attitude toward setting academic goals, completing academic requirements, the effectiveness of the efforts to meet academic goals, and being successful in the academic environment" (cited in Schnuck & Handal, 2011). In the field of teacher education, academic adjustment refers to the performance and adaptation of the pre-service teachers to his/ her academics based on the language transition the pre-service teacher undergoes. In this whole process of adjustment, some students excel in achieving their targets and some students get somewhere left behind due to their lack of coping strategies and non-consideration of their problems by the institutions and corresponding authority (Laycock, 1984). The bright students as well as the not-so performing students or the pre-teachers' issues must be taken into account in order to make a healthy training environment.

Adjustment Issues

The implementation of a three-language policy in a diverse classroom setting with a multilingual setting is a hectic task in itself. The role of the mother tongue at the primary level is crucial role. The teachers of the primary level are considered to be competent enough to transact the curriculum in the mother tongue of the learner, but this is not always the case.

It is important that teachers receive training that equips them to deal with these kinds of situations. The preparation they receive at teacher education institutions is essential to their competence in it. The student teachers must possess the necessary skills to instruct and learn in an area that is distinct from their hometown. People typically have a hard time acclimating to new languages, customs, and cultures. These problems frequently result in melancholy, loneliness, poor academic achievement, etc. (Steen *et al.* 2017).

Purpose of the Scale

Language education is an essential component of any teacher engaged in teaching at school level. A teacher at this level is considered to be competent enough to communicate with the students both in their regional language/ mother tongue as well as in the official language thereby acting as a bridge in developing the language related competencies in the students. But in this whole scenario, the issues of the teachers are somewhere overlooked by everyone. When the teacher himself/ herself doesn't know the local language, how can s/he act a bridge? This inability of the teachers often leads to mal adjustment among them making them doubt their teaching and academic skills. Many studies have been done on students' language and adjustment-related difficulties, but not many studies have been done on teachers, such as those by Tripathi (2008), Giri and Singh (2018), and Gao & Yang (2023). In order to teach effectively without encountering linguistic barriers, pre-service teachers must be prepared for their competence during the teacher training phase. It is necessary to address all of their problems and difficulties with the local language in order to prepare them to be effective teachers. Since most student teachers will be hired in a location where the language spoken is different, one of their biggest challenges will be language-related issues. As such, they must be prepared to avoid these difficulties in both their teaching and learning.

This study aims to identify the issues of the pupil teachers according to their language adjustment problems in teaching and academics. This study is aimed at developing a scale that not only identifies the teaching related problems of the pre-service teachers but also the academic problems of them with special emphasis on the language of communication and interaction. The standardization of the scale is one of the critical aspects that this paper has taken into consideration with greater depth.

Objective of the Study

The Pre-teachers' Language Adjustment Scale (PLAS) was constructed in-line with the following objectives:

1. To construct a comprehensive scale for checking the level of language-related adjustment problems of pre-service teachers.
2. To test the reliability and validity of the Pre-teachers' Language Adjustment Scale (PLAS).
3. To establish the norms and administration procedure for the Pre-teachers' Language Adjustment Scale (PLAS).

Preparation of the Scale

The need of the scale was felt due to the immense role of a competent and multilingual teacher catering to the mankind's upliftment to achieve the concept of "universal brotherhood". The scale primarily composed of the items compiled from the studies already conducted in the field of adjustment. However, the studies were primarily based on the levels of primary education, secondary education, and higher education. In order to make the scale suitable and relevant in the field of teacher education, unstructured interviews and informal interactions were conducted with 10 pre-teachers pursuing for their engagement in the primary education division, 7 pre-teachers in secondary division and 5 pre-teachers preparing for teacher education division based on their language-related experience during the pre-service training period.

Based on the responses received from the pupil-teachers, the scale was initially constructed on two major dimensions directed at measuring adjustment level faced by the pre-service teachers. These included,

1. Teaching Adjustment

The teaching adjustment relates to the adjustment pattern of pupil-teachers and teachers while teaching in the classroom. Teaching internship is an important component of any pre-service teacher education programme provided that they receive mentorship from the teacher educators (Beckmann & Ehmke, 2023).

Teaching in a multilingual setting according to Delbridge and Helman (2016) is dependent on the availability of required resources to make the learning successful. As per the findings of Kumar & Khare (2023), teachers generally face problems related to linguistic and cultural diversity, anxiety among learners and lack of teacher training which has a direct influence on the teaching strategies that is to be adopted by a teacher.

2. Academic Adjustment

Academic adjustment referred to how people change their behaviour in response to their own needs and requirements in the classroom. Academic adjustments are changes made to a student's method of satisfying the academic demands of a course or academic programme (Jean, 2010). When it comes to pre-teachers, the academic adjustment refers to the pupil-teacher's adjustment to both the learning and teaching aspects of their training in a teacher education institution.

The training of pre-teachers in a teacher education institute involves exposure to diverse cultural changes they are supposed to undergo during their coming future. The fellow batchmates are generally from different locations carrying their own lingual identity with a unique set of patterns. The same is visible in the case of teacher educators.

The pre-teachers certainly face challenges in adjusting to such linguistic diversity in their academics just like any other higher education student adjusting to the language transitions (Sahoo & Kharwar, 2023; Nonglait & Myrthong, 2021; Jemal, 2012). The academics of a pupil-teacher has a significant role in ensuring quality education (Vilppu *et al.* 2023).

The freshman students, when they join university generally face problems related to adjustment and socialization thereby affecting the academics of the students (Ababu *et al.* 2018). Hence the academic adjustment is also aimed at covering the aspects of socialization.

This dimension basically dealt with the aspects of classroom interaction, interaction with the teacher educators, interaction with the batchmates, and acquisition of local terminologies in order to interact with the rest. The teaching-learning materials, the training inputs received etc. had a significant presence in this dimension.

According to Johnson & Christensen (2014), the scale standardization process involved a cycle from formation of first draft to the preparation of the final draft. The detailed process includes.

First Draft

The first draft was prepared according to the inputs received from the interview and a few of the studies. The items were initially constructed using

the aforementioned inputs followed by further grammaticizing and further refining the items as per the objectives of the scale based on the inputs of several experts. Thereafter, the classification of those items was done according to the dimensions of academic adjustment and teaching adjustment.

Teaching Adjustment

The teaching adjustment in this study included the challenges and problems which are faced by the pre-service teacher during their internship period. These range from their teaching confidence to joyful teaching. The broad themes of teaching adjustment included the table 1.

Academic Adjustment

The item of academic adjustment is based on the academic training received during the training phase by the pre-service teachers. The broad themes of academic adjustment included in table 2.

Pre-Draft

The pre-draft of the scale consisted of total closed-ended 54 items. These items were both of positive and negative statements. The statements in the scale included all the aforementioned themes in it. The items were further subdivided into the respective dimensions of academic adjustment and teaching adjustment. In order to make the scale more credible, several filler items were added to ensure the guilty respondents being non-serious towards the scale (Lukács & Ansorge, 2021). The classification of items is illustrated in the table 3.

Scale of Measurement

The Likert-type scale was used to measure the variable of adjustment in this case. It is a type of scale that is used to gather information and measure qualitative data (Boone & Boone, 2012; Cheng, 2012; Kokolakis, 2017 as cited in Kusmaryono, Wijayanti, & Maharani, 2022). The five point Likert type scale ranged from strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Selection of Variables

The variables like gender, locality, area, educational background of parents have been considered in this scale for the research purposes based on their objectives. The gender variable differed in case of

Table 1: Themes of teaching adjustment

Sl. No.	Theme	Particulars
1	Personality	Personality of a teacher (pre-teacher) is a key factor in how a teacher should teach and how does he/she manage the classroom scenario (Lukman <i>et al.</i> 2021). The outcome of a teacher's work in the profession is heavily influenced by their personality traits (Jurczak & Jurczak, 2015; Jemal, 2012). This theme is important to know whether the pre-teachers face any issue in terms of their personality traits.
2	Communication Skills	Teachers with effective communication skills foster an environment that is better for teaching and learning for the pupils (Duta, Panisoara & Panisoara, 2015). In that case scenario, the pre-teachers must be good in communication skills that will lead to their achievement in teaching competencies. To ensure effective communication skills, a teacher must be well adjusted.
3	Motivation	One of a teacher's professional competencies is motivation (Jud, Hirt, Rosenthal, & Karlen, 2023). Motivation is an essential component in ensuring a well-adjusted pre-teacher thereby making an individual sound in teaching and learning process.
4	Teaching Skills	The critical component for transmitting teachers' theoretical knowledge to students is teaching skills (Samson & Vyjayanthi, 2013). The National Council for Teacher Education has identified 10 major competencies that are to be developed in a teacher (Competency-based and Commitment-oriented Teacher Education for Quality School Education, 1998, pp. 21). Based on these competencies, the pre-teacher is expected to accomplish them during the training phase. These competencies proper assimilation is dependent on the nature of implementation-based knowledge of pre-service teachers. The pre-teachers often face difficulty in implementing this theoretical aspect into practicality.
5	Orientation in TEI	The quality of orientation provided by the teacher education institution helps in improving the teaching quality of the pre-teachers. A good teaching practice programme aids pre-service teachers in improving their performance by providing feedback to the supervisor (Mufidah, 2019). The quality of support and guidance is important in ensuring a well-adjusted and competent future teacher. Jean (2010) also highlighted importance of institutions in adjustment.

Table 2: Themes of academic adjustment

Sl. No.	Theme	Particulars
1	Availability of materials	Any academic achievement is dependent on the availability of the required study materials and self-help materials. So is the scenario with the academics of pre-service teachers (Singh & Jack, 2022). This theme particularly dealt with finding the hindrances a learner (pre-teacher) faces during the course of pre-service teacher education programme.
2	Communication	The communication is an important aspect in ensuring the adjustment of an individual (Tahan <i>et al.</i> 2020). Lack of communication among family members & teachers leads to isolation (Andrade, 2009; Agrawal, 2018). This theme overlooked on communication acting as a factor in adjustment of pre-service teachers.
3	Culture exchange	Cultural exchange is common in a learner's lifetime. Culture especially has a huge impact on academic adjustment of pupils (Singh & Jack, 2022). The problems related to culture exchange included perceived cultural discrimination, language barriers etc. (Sridhar & Jain, 2018). The language-based adjustment hence finds its place in culture as well.
4	Language acquisition	Language, as the main focus of the scale, it surely has a key role in ensuring the academic adjustment of pupil-teachers. Students often cite language as the basis for all the difficulties in academics (Malaklolunthu & Selan, 2011).
5	Socialization	Ababu <i>et al.</i> (2018) and Jean (2010) confirmed that socialization has a significant role in adjustment and 50% freshman students face this problem every year. Academic socialization refers to learning about norms and values through relationships with people who one considers to be significant persons in one's daily life (Bæck, 2017).

Table 3: Dimension-wise classification of items

Sl. No.	Dimensions	No. of Statements	No. of Positive Statements	No. of Negative Statements
1	Teaching Adjustment	28	12	16
2	Academic Adjustment	24	12	12
3	Filler Items	2		

adjustment (Jemal, 2012). The variable of locality included native and nonnative locality of the pre-teachers. The locality provides different opinion towards the adjustment level (Wagner, 1996). The factor of area has a critical role in the study of adjustment of Chen *et al.* (2019), hence it can be assumed to have significance for this study as well. Educational background of parents was included to gather information about whether the pre-teacher is a freshman university student or not. It has a significant role in adjustment pattern of students (Schnuck & Handal, 2011; Jemal, 2012).

Expert Opinion

According to Johnson & Christensen (2014), the first draft of a scale is sent to experts for their recommendations on various criterion. The concerned scale dealt with opinions not only from panel of experts of different field but also from the target population (Morgado *et al.* 2017). The experts for this scale included, language expert, psychological expert, teacher education expert, and research methodology expert. The language expert guided on the tense and figures of speech of the scale. The tense of the scale was converted from past to present to make the target audience larger and more approachable. It was done to improve the quality of the scale like classification of expressions, language ambiguity, and relevance. These were rectified as per the recommendations and guidance.

The expert from the field of psychology highlighted the relevance of the items and statements with relation to the psychological construct, i.e., adjustment. The expert also guided on the credibility of the statements and their measurement parameters. As the scale dealt in the field of pre-service teacher education, the draft of the scale was sent to an expert of teacher education. The expert guided on the significance of the statements in reference to teacher education and the suitability of the statements for the pre-service teachers.

As the scale is to be used for research purposes, the scale was sent to an expert in research methodology in order to get insight into the technique of measurement and assessment and its implications in the outcome of the scale.

Pre-try out

As Morgado *et al.* (2017) stated, the opinion from

the representation of the target population is equally important in scale development. 20 representations from the target population were provided with the draft of the scale to understand the feasibility, relevance, and applicability of the scale for the target population. Along with this, suggestions were also collected from them to make the scale reach a larger audience and design this scale user-friendly.

Based on the suggestions and reflections from the experts and the target population, the scale was modified according to the need of the hour. Thereafter, the second draft of the scale was formulated in order to carry out the pilot testing.

Second Draft

The second draft of the scale was formulated in order to make it more apprehensive and accessible for the respondents. In order to standardize the scale, it was administered on 100 pre-teachers engaged in their training phase in the Western region of the Indian state of Odisha. The respondents were selected through snowball sampling approached via the teacher educators of respective institution, their batchmates chosen via simple random sampling. Initially the data from the respondents were collected via Google Form.

Thereafter, the data were encoded accordingly as per the requirements. The data were then arranged in descending order from highest scores to lowest scores. As per Kelley (1939) the standardization process involves division of the subjects (respondents) into top and bottom 27%. The top 27% respondents were denoted as R_U and the bottom 27% were denoted as R_L .

As the scale was not based on any test but an opinionnaire, there was no need for the calculation of difficulty index of the scale (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). However, the discrimination index of the scale was calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient through MS Office Excel 365 and IBM SPSS 20. The items with correlation coefficient of more than +0.4 were accepted in the final draft. The items with correlation coefficient of 4.0 and above indicated moderate positive significance (Ratner, 2009). In the end of the item analysis, the total no. of items in each of the dimension excluding the filler items are tabulated below.

Table 4: Items selected in each dimension after item analysis

Sl. No.	Dimensions	No. of Statements	No. of Positive Statements	No. of Negative Statements
1	Teaching Adjustment	14	1	13
2	Academic Adjustment	13	1	12
3	Filler Items	2		

Final Draft

The final draft of the scale composed total of 29 items finalized after the calculation of discrimination power (D.P.) using Pearson correlation coefficient. The correlation was established between the total score and scores of each item of each respondent. 25 items of the scale were rejected due to their weak correlation. Though the filler items had zero or weak correlation these qualified for the final draft due to their importance in ensuring the seriousness of the participants.

Table 5: Distribution of the items in the final draft of PLAS

Sl. No.	Dimension	No. of items	Position of items	
			Negative items	Positive items
1	Teaching Adjustment	14	3,7,9,11,13,15,17,19,20,22,23,25,27	8
2	Academic Adjustment	13	30,32,34,36,38,40,41,43,47,49,51,54	37
3	Filler	2	29,53	

Standardization of PLAS

The standardization of the Pre-teachers' Language Adjustment scale (PLAS) was done based on the procedures recommended by Johnson & Christensen (2014), Garrett (1981) & Best, Kahn & Jha (2017). For the purpose of standardization, 165 pre-teachers were randomly from 9 government teacher education institutions of the Odisha state. Thereafter the received data were encoded to initiate the procedure of standardization. The standardization process involved three major steps i.e., calculation of reliability, obtaining validity and finalization of norm of the scale.

Reliability

The reliability of an inventory depends upon the consistency with which it gauges, the ability to which it is applied (Garrett, 1981). Here, the internal consistency of the scale was calculated using SPSS 20. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the scale was $\alpha = 0.936$. This showed excellent internal consistency of the scale (Taber, 2018, pp. 6). However, after the deletion of the item 37, the Cronbach's Alpha value increased to 0.943 which again represented a very good internal consistency. The reliability statistics of the scale is tabulated below.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the final draft

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of items
78.8848	323.468	17.98523	27

The dimension wise reliability is represented in the table below.

Table 7: Dimension-wise reliability of the scale

Dimension	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Teaching Adjustment	14	0.887
Academic Adjustment	13	0.903

Validity

Validity is the extent to which a test measures what its purpose to measure. (Best, Kahn & Jha, 2017). Thus, the validity of a test means the degree to which the test measures its purpose to measure.

Face validity and content validity of PLAS was obtained from different experts from the fields of language education, teacher education, psychology, and research methodology. The researcher discussed on different aspects with the experts like language ambiguity, clarity and familiarity of the scale, the fruitfulness of the results and its applicability in the current educational scenario.

The PLAS was then given to another expert of psychology and educational psychology to gain expert's validation on the scale's success in measuring the specific psychological construct. The necessary changes were made in the scale as and when required to make the scale more user friendly. In the end, the scale obtained the face, content, and construct validity from the experts of diverse fields.

Administration procedure

The scale has total 27 items that can be completed in a duration of maximum 10 minutes. The participants should be provided with calm environment and should be instructed to follow the instructions either dictated by the investigator or the one mentioned in the booklet of the scale.

Instructions

There are 27 statements given to you in a booklet. Each statement has 5 options namely strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The respondents are requested to tick the option which suits them the best. No option is right or wrong. Whichever you find suitable is the correct option itself. The scale is not related to your academics neither your teacher educators will have access to your responses. Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purposes. You are requested to be relaxed and free from tensions as it will not at all be read by anyone except the researcher. In case of any difficulties in understanding the statements, feel free to contact to the investigator and clarify your confusion.

The details provided by you only include some basic details like your name, age, gender, educational board, educational background of your parents, institutional affiliation, area, locality etc. in a close ended manner.

Scoring

After collection of data from the target population, these will be encoded in order to be analysed for the specified objectives. For each of the items, the scores are as follows.

Table 8: Scoring of the scale

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive items	1	2	3	4	5
Negative items	5	4	3	2	1

The highest point in this scale is 135 and minimum score that can be obtained by a participant is 27. The higher the point means the high level of language mal-adjustment and lower the point means the high level of language well-adjustment.

Norms

A norm is the average level of performance for a given group of people. Any psychological test that only yields a raw score has no meaning until it is combined with additional information to allow for further interpretation. Here the standard score of the scale was calculated using Z score. A Z-score represents a raw score that is represented in standard deviations and its position in relation to the mean (Vittoz, 2021). The norms calculated for the scale is tabulated below.

Table 9: Norms of the scale

Z-score	Raw Score	Level	Interpretation
-1σ and below	≤ 60	Low	Well Adjusted
Between -1σ and +1σ	Between 61 and 96	Moderate	Normally Adjusted
+1σ and above	≥97	High	Mal-adjusted

Shortcomings and Further Direction of the Scale

The researchers during the course of time it was encountered that the demographic variables like gender, locality and area didn't have a significant effect on deciding the language-based adjustment problems of the pre-service teachers (Sahoo & Kharwar, 2023). Therefore, further variables should be included into consideration to get an in-depth insight into the problems.

CONCLUSION

Adjustment is a never-ending process in an individual's life span. Several researchers have used the term "adjustment" in different senses like accommodation, adaptation etc. This process is important in almost every aspect of school education and higher education. Several studies have been conducted in these fields. Whereas there have been miniscule number of studies like Giri & Singh (2018) and Sahoo & Kharwar (2023) have been conducted in the field of teacher education focussing on their adjustment related matters. The need of a well-adjusted teacher is important in ensuring quality of education to be imparted in schools. In order to ensure this important aspect to be kept in mind, a scale measuring these aspects is equally essential. The globalized world now witnesses a continuous exchange of language and culture in

and across people. Therefore, to make the education system more meaningful and accessible, capacity building of pre-service teachers is necessary in their language related problems.

An attempt was made to identify the language-based adjustment issues faced by the pre-service teachers where the official language and the local language different. The scale to measure such adjustment level was named as "Pre-teachers' Language Adjustment Scale". The scale was initially tested on the pre-teachers of Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha. Based on their data, the scale was standardized to make it more meaningful and accessible. This scale addressed the need of a well-adjusted pre-teacher to complete the pre-service teacher education programme with full potential so that it can serve to a larger mass in the coming future. This scale also sets a target for the budding researchers to include more dimensions and variables so that the issues of teachers, both pre-service and in-service could be addressed properly, and adequate remedies can be taken by the competent authority whenever required.

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