

Wangkatja Noun Suffixes

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Introduction

In this paper Wangkatja noun suffixes are analysed and described. The analysis is based on the compilation of a large corpus of historical data dating between 1920s and 2020s. Goldfields Aboriginal Language Centre Aboriginal Corporation (GALCAC) has been collecting data for over two decades from numerous speakers residing in various parts of the Goldfields region, Western Australia, including Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, and Kalgoorlie.

Wangkatja is a member of the Wati language family, a subgroup of the Pama-Nyugan family of Australian languages. Its AIATSIS code is A103 and it is closely related to Ngaanyatjarra, AIATSIS code A38. The data suggests that the name of the speech form comes from the word *wangka* meaning speech and language and other derivations of the word exist such as *Wangkayi* or *Wangkatja*, a First Nations person; *wangka-* to talk, to speak. Amee Glass and Dorothy Hackett, the compilers of *Ngaanyatjarra and Ngaatjatjarra to English Dictionary 2003*, noted Wangkatja as a linguistic form:

‘I am often asked the question “What about Wangkayi (Wongi)? Aren’t the Warburton people Wangkayi?” The origin of the term Wangkayi is now somewhat obscure. However it is mainly used by white people to refer to the Aborigines living in the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia. The people themselves use the term Wangkatja (meaning people who talk our talk) to distinguish themselves from others who talk completely unrelated languages (including English).

The language, of course, had no written form. It was first scientifically studied by Wilfrid Douglas, a linguist of the United Aborigines Mission, in the early 1950’s. He devised the alphabet for the language and published several books about it.’

Into Another World, Amee Glass, 1978

‘You may have heard the Ngaanyatjarra language referred to as “Wangkayi (‘Wongi’). White people, especially use this term to refer to the language of the Aboriginal people of the Eastern Goldfields and beyond (although these Aboriginal people prefer to call themselves and their language ‘Wangkatja’).

Ngaanyatjarra & Ngaatjatjarra to English Dictionary, Amee Glass, Dorothy Hackett, 2003

It seems that Wangkatja might have emerged as a creole¹ in a similar way as Cundeelee Wangka, Cundeelee, Western Australia and Martu Wangka, Northwest Western Australia. The

¹ A Creole is “A term used in sociolinguistics to refer to a pidgin language which has become the mother-tongue of a speech community ... The process of creolization expands the structural and stylistic range of the pidginized

data contains variants in glossing, spelling, sentence structure, tense suffixes, contemporary phrases, and word formation. This indicates that the corpus may contain more than one variant of the same speech form.

Noun suffixes

Current Wangkatja linguistic corpus contains 17 noun suffixes, focus marker, augmentative (AUGM), emphatic (EMPH), intransitive subject suffix (INTR), ergative (ERG), dative case marker (DAT), possessive (POSS), proprietive (PROP), comitative (COM), instrumental (INST), ablative (ABL), allative (ALL), locative (LOC), semblative (SEM), resultative (RES), negation (NEG), -wiya *not, negative*, -wiya and -wiyatjarra *without*, and kinship pair suffix.

1. Focus marker, **-nga** for proper nouns ending in a consonant.

- 1.1. Mininy-**nga** wangkangu.
 Mininy_nga wangka+ngu
 Mininy_focus_marker talk+PAST
 Mininy talked. (KLCA)
- 1.2. Puntu Nash-**nga** yamatji
 puntu Nash_nga yamatji
 man Nash_focus_marker spouse
- tawarra pakarnu tjirntungka.
 tawarra paka+rnu tjirntu+ngka
 together rise+PAST sun+LOC
 Mr Nash and his wife arose together in the morning. (Gordon, 2007)
- 1.3. Tjukurrpa watjarnu puntu Jalka-**nga**
 tjukurrpa watja+nu puntu Jalka+nga
 creation_story tell+PAST man Jalka+focus_marker
- nyinangu palu ngunytju tawarra.
 nyina+ngu palu ngunytju tawarra
 live+PAST 3SG mother together
 As the story told, the man Jalka lived with his mother. (KLCA)

2. Focus marker, **-nya** with an attribute

- 2.1. Tjamunya marra ngayukutu.
 tjamu+nya marra ngayu+kutu
 grandfather+focus marker bring 1SG+ALL
 Bring your grandfather to me. (KLCA)

language, so that the creolized language becomes comparable in formal and functional complexity to other languages.” A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics, David Crystal, 2008.

2.2. Palu	kaarnu	tjananya
palu	kaa+rnu	tjana+nya
3SG	chase_away+PAST	3PL+focus_marker

partu	yikarringu.
partu	yikarri+ngu
but	laugh+PAST

He chased them away but they laughed. (The Magpie and The Crow)

2.3. Palunya	parna	pirinya
palu+nya	parna	piri+nya
3SG+focus_marker	dust	shoulder+focus_marker

nyaarru	purtu	nyakula.
nyaarru	purtu	nya+ku+la
pity	can't	see+FUT+IMP

It has got dusty shoulders, poor thing, it can't be seen. (McKenzie)

3. Augmentative suffix, **-pa**.

3.1. Kurlingka	tjirntu	katu	kankarra,	ngurra-station- pa
kurli+ngka	tjirntu	katu	kankarra	ngurra+station+pa
hot+LOC	sun	on_top	high	home+station+AUGM

bush-angka	kukarntjarri-kayiranyi,	wala	piyarrka	pirni
bush+angka	kukarntjarri_kanyi+ranyi	wala	piyarrka	pirni
bush+LOC	sheep_keep+PRES	quick	galah	many

paarrarnu	homestead-kutu.
paarra+rnu	homestead+kutu
fly+PAST	homestead+ALL

One hot summer day, when the sun was high up, in the outback sheep station, the pink and grey galahs flew quickly towards the homestead. (Gordon, 2007)

3.2. Karlkurlingka	ngayunya	kanyiranyi wala
Karlkurli_ngka	ngayu+nya	kanyi+ranyi wala
Karlkurli_LOC	1SG+focus_marker	to_be_born+PRES since_then

purlkarringu Mt Margaret Mission-**pa**.
 purlka+rri+ngu Mt Margaret Mission_pa.
 big+verbalizer+PAST Mt Margaret Mission_AUGM

I was born in Kalgoorlie, since then, I grew up at Mt Margaret Mission. (Polak, 2008)

4. Emphatic suffix, **-pa**

4.1. Tjinguru tjitji pirni pukurl**panya**.
 tjinguru tjitji pirni pukurl+pa+nya
 maybe child many happy+EMPH+focus_marker
Maybe the children are happy.

4.2. Karlkurli-ngka ngayunya kanyiranyi wala
 Karlkurli_ngka ngayu+nya kanyi+ranyi wala
 Karlkurli_LOC 1SG+focus_marker to_be_born+PRES since_then

purlkarringu Mt Margaret Mission-**pa**.
 purlka+rri+ngu Mt Margaret Mission_pa
 big+verbalizer+PAST Mt Margaret Mission_EMPH
 I was born in Kalgoorlie, since then, I grew up at Mt Margaret Mission.
 (Polak, 2008)

4.3. Tjana tjirta purlkanya yurriranyi
 tjana tjirta purlka+nya yurri+ranyi
 3PL bird big+focus_marker move+PRES

katungka marungka yutirri purin**pa**.
 katu+ngka maru+ngka yutirri puriny+pa
 high+LOC dark+LOC appear gently+ EMPH
Those big birds are moving in the sky and they slowly appear at night time. (Why The Emu Can't Fly)

5. Intransitive subject suffix **-pa**

5.1. Marlan**pa** yularranyi.
 marlany+pa yula+rranyi
 sibling+INTR cry+PRES
The younger sibling is crying.

5.2. Puntu Jones-inya kurri**pa**
 puntu Jones+i+nya kurri+pa
 man Jones+EPTH+focus_marker spouse+INTR

katja tawarra wukangu kapi
 katja tawarra wuka+ngu kapi
 son together move+PAST waterhole

purlkakutu mayiku.
 purlka+kutu mayi+ku
 big+ALL food+DAT
Mr Jones, his wife and his son moved to a big waterhole together for food.
 (Gordon, 2007)

6. Ergative suffix, *doer of an action*, **-lu**, **-tu**, and **-tju**. While **-lu** attaches to a vowel final noun, **-tu** attaches to a consonant final noun, and **-tju** attaches to a nasal final /ny/ noun.

6.1. Marntilu pikurru purtu pungu.
 marnti+lu pikurru purtu pu+ngu
 boy+ERG bobtail_lizard can't hit+PAST
The boy couldn't hit the bobtail lizard. (KLCA)

6.2. Chainsaw-lu kuliranyi yamatji
 Chainsaw+lu kuli+ranyi yamatji
 Chainsaw+ERG hear+PRES friend

pirninya ngula paarralku tjanaltawarra.
 pirni+nya ngula paarra+lku tjana+l+tawarra.
 many+ focus_marker then fly+FUT 3PL+EPTH+together
Chainsaw hears its friends, then, they fly away all together. (Gordon, 2007)

6.3. Mama ngunytju tawarralu
 mama ngunytju tawarra+lu
 father mother together+ERG

tirtu ngurriranyi yurntalpa.
 tirtu ngurri+ranyi yurntal+pa
 long_time look_for+PRES daughter+ AUGM
The father and the mother together looked for their daughter for a long time. (Polak 2008)

6.4. Kurlpirrtu puntu nyangu.
 kurlpirr+tu puntu nya+ngu
 grey_kangaroo+ERG man see+PAST
The grey kangaroo saw the man. (KLCA)

6.5. Tjukurntu nyimu yampurnu.
 Tjukurn+tu nyimu yampu+rnu
 Tjukurn+ERG dog hug+PAST
Tjukurn hugged the dog. (KLCA)

6.6. Robert-tu warta kanyinu ngula Puntu Jones-ilu
 Robert+tu warta kanyi+nu ngula puntu Jones+i+lu
 Robert+ERG tree hold+PAST then man Jones+EPTH+ERG

warta kalytjurrpungu chainsaw-tjarra.
 warta kalytjurrpu+ngu chainsaw_tjarra
 tree cut_off+PAST chainsaw+INST
*Robert held the tree then, Mr Jones cut it off with the chainsaw
 (Gordon, 2007)*

6.7. Yirliny**tju** Luwa-nya nyangu.
 yirliny+tju Luwa+nya nya+ngu
 honey_ant+ERG Luwa+focus_marker see+PAST
The honey ant saw Luwa. (KLCA)

6.8. Mininy-**tju** puntu nyangu.
 Mininy+tju puntu nya+ngu
 Mininy+ERG man see+PAST
Mininy saw the man. (KLCA)

7. Dative case marker, *for*, **-ku**

7.1. Tjana kukaku ma-pitjangu.
 tjana kuka+ku ma-pitja+ngu
 3PL meat+DAT away_move+PAST
They moved away for meat.

7.2. Puntu Jones-inya kurripa katja tawarra
 puntu Jones+i+nya kurri+pa katja tawarra
 man Jones+EPth+focus_marker spouse+ AUGM son together

 wukangu kapi purlkakutu mayiku.
 wuka+ngu kapi purlka+kutu mayi+ku
 move+PAST water_hole big+ALL food+DAT
Mr Jones, his wife and his son together moved to a big water hole for food. (Gordon, 2007)

7.3. Marntilu ngurriranyi warta waruku,
 marnti+lu ngurri+ranyi warta waru+ku
 boy+ERG look_for+PRES stick fire+DAT

 palu nyakulanyi tjamuku tjina purlka.
 palu nya+kulanyi tjamu+ku tjina purlka
 3SG see+PRES_CONT grandpa+POSS footprint big
While the boy is looking for sticks for fire, he sees grandfather's big footprints. (Boyle - Mopoke Owl)

8. Possessive suffix, *have, has, of*, **-ku**

8.1. Nyimuku kuka.
 nyimu+ku kuka
 dog+POSS meat
The dog's meat. (KLCA)

8.2. Marntilu ngurriranyi warta waruku,
 marnti+lu ngurri+ranyi warta waru+ku
 boy+ERG look_for+PRES stick fire+DAT

palu	nyakulanyi	tjamuku	tjina	purlka.
palu	nya+kulanyi	tjamu+ku	tjina	purlka
3SG	see+PRES_CONT	grandpa+POSS	footprint	big

While the boy is looking for sticks for fire, he sees grandfather's big footprints. (Boyle - Mopoke Owl)

8.3. Warlawurrunya kamuru tjirta pirniku.
 warlawurru+nya kumuru tjirta pirni+ku
 eagle+focus_marker uncle bird many+POSS
The Eagle is the uncle of the birds. (The Magpie and The Crow)

9. Propriative suffix, *having*, **-tjarra**

9.1. Palunya yirramit**tjarra**.
 palu+nya yirrami+tjarra
 3SG+focus_marker blood+PROP
It has got blood on it.

9.2. Tjirta nyanganya ngurra wartangka yarlat**tjarra**.
 tjirta nyanganya ngurra warta+ngka yarla+tjarra
 bird this home tree+LOC hole+PROP
This bird lives in the trees with hollows. (Wangkatja Grammar)

9.3. Tjukurpa watjanu marlu wala wiput**tjarra**.
 tjukurpa watja+nu marlu wala wipu+tjarra
 story tell+PAST red_kangaroo since_then tail+PROP
As the story told, the red kangaroo has got a tail since then.
 (How The Kangaroo Grew Its Tail)

10. Comitative suffix, *with*, *togetherness*, **-tjarra**

8.1. Ngunytjut**tjarra** nyinarra bush-angka.
 ngunytju+tjarra nyina+rra bush_angka
 mother+COM live+IMP bush_LOC
I live in the bush with my mother. (Wangkatja Grammar)

8.2. Ngayulu nyawa warlku warta
 ngayulu+lu nya+wa warlku warta
 1SG+ERG see+IMP quandong tree

yaraly	warlkut tjarra .	Karnpi,	karnpi!
yaraly	warlku+tjarra	karnpi	karnpi
red	quandong+COM	good	good

I see a quandong tree with red quandongs on it. Yum, yum!
 (Boyle, 2018)

11. Instrumental suffix, *with*, **-angka**, **-ngku**, and **-tjarra**

- 11.1. Warntungka tjutula winta!
 warntu+angka tjutu+la winta
 clothing+INST cover IMP window
Cover the window with the curtain!
- 11.2. Parna yurntila marangka.
 parna yurntu+la mara+angka
 dirt push+IMP hand+INST
Push the dirt with your hands. (WNTAC)
- 11.3. Puntu Jones-ilu waru tilinu woodstove-angka.
 puntu Jones+i+lu waru tili+nu woodstove+angka
 man Jones+EPH+ERG fire make_fire+PAST woodstove+LOC
- Palu billycan tjurtinu kapingka wala
 palu billycan tjurti+nu kapi+angka wala
 3SG billycan fill+PAST water+INST again
- kapi tjunu stove-angka cuptea-ku.
 kapi tju+nu stove+angka cuptea+ku
 water put+PAST stove+LOC cuptea+DAT
Mr Jones made a fire in the woodstove. He filled the billycan up with water for a cup of tea. (Gordon, 2007)
- 11.4. Nyuntulu yiwarranu tjinangku.
 nyuntu+lu yiwarra+nu tjina+ngku
 2SG+ERG make_track+PAST foot+INST
You made a track with your feet. (WNTAC)
- 11.5. Palu kulira, "Ngayu wuurlalku tjarlpangku
 palu kuli+ra ngayu wuurla+lku tjarlpa+ngku
 3SG think+PRES 1SG jump+FUT thigh+INST
- ngula wiputjarra warungka".
 ngula wipu+tjarra waru+angka
 then tail+INST fire+LOC
*It thought, "I will jump with thighs, then, with tail through the fire".
 (Why the Kangaroo Hops)*
- 11.6. Tjitjilu nyimu pungu purnutjarra.
 tjitji+lu nyimu pu+ngu purnu+tjarra
 child+ERG dog hit+PAST stick+INST
The child hit the dog with a stick. (Wangkatja Grammar)

- 11.7. Robert-tu warta kanyinu ngula Puntu
 Robert+tu warta kanyi+nu ngula puntu
 Robert+ERG tree hold+PAST then man
- Jones-ilu warta kalytjurrpungu chainsaw-**tjarra**.
 Jones+i+lu warta kalytjurrpu+ngu chainsaw+tjarra
 Jones+EPH+ERG tree cut+PAST chainsaw+INST
Robert held the tree then, Mr Jones cut it off with the chainsaw.
 (Gordon, 2007)

12. Ablative suffix, *from*, **-kutja**, **-nguru**. The linguistic corpus contains **-kurni** as an ablative suffix without an example sentence.

- 12.1. Puntu Jones-ilu spade manu shed-**kutja**.
 puntu Jones+i+lu spade ma+nu shed+kutja
 man Jones+EPH+ERG spade take+PAST shed+ABL
Mr Jones took the spade from shed. (Gordon, 2007)

- 12.2. Nalpa pirnilu watjanu,
 nalpa pirni+lu watja+nu
 old many+ERG say+PAST
- "Nginngi nyanga kapi kakarrakutja".
 nginngi nyanga kapi kakarra+kutja
 snake this country east+ABL
The Elders said, "This snake is from an eastern country".
 (Water Snake and Three Magpie)

- 12.3. Yarla purlkalanguru tjutingu kapi
 yarla purlka+la+nguru tjutji+ngu kapi
 opening big+EPH+ABL drip+PAST water
- purlkanya parnakutu.
 purlka+nya parna+kutu
 big+focus_marker ground+ALL
A lot of water dripped from the big opening to the ground.

(Fasola 2010)

13. Allative suffix, *towards*, *to*, *hither*, **-kutu**, **-kati**

- 13.1. Nyangakutu.
 nyanga+kutu
 here+ALL
Towards here. (KLCA)
- 13.2. Palu ma-pitjangu hospital-**kutu**.
 palu ma_pitja+ngu hospital+kutu
 3SG away_move+PAST hospital+ALL
He moved away towards the hospital. (KLCA)

13.3. Marntilu pulpakutu pitjalanyi, kuliltjaku.
 marnti+lu pulpa+kutu pitja+lanyi kuli+l+tjaku
 boy+ERG cave+ALL move+PRES think+EP+PURP
The boy is moving towards a cave to think.

13.4. Nyinakati ngayulatawarra.
 nyina+kati ngayu+latawarra
 sit+towards 1SG+with
Sit down with me. (KLCA)

14. Locative suffix, *at, in, on, -ngka*. The language corpus contains only one example each for **-tja** and its variant **-ta** as a result of that the reason behind the use of **-ta** and **-ngka** in the same sentence (see 13.5) is not analysed.

14.1. Nyurra ngurrangka nyinarranyi?
 nyurra ngurra+ngka nyina+rranyi
 2SG camp+LOC stay+PRES
Are you staying in the camp? (KLCA)

14.2. Tjitji yapungka nyinangu.
 tjitji yapu+ngka nyina+ngu
 child rock+LOC sit+PAST
The child sat on a rock. (KLCA)

14.3. Tjukurrpa watjanu tjuma wangkatjalu
 tjukurrpa watja+nu tjuma wangkatja+lu
 story say+PAST story person+ERG

 watjanu karlaya pirni paarpungku katungka.
 watja+nu karlaya pirni paarpu+ngku katu+ngka
 say+PAST emu many fly+PAST high+LOC
As the story told, people told the story of the emus who could fly at a height. (Why The Emu Can't Fly)

14.4. Yirlinytja.
 yirliny+tja
 honey_ant+LOC
On the honey ant. (Wangkatja Grammar)

14.5. Palu kurnta yungarra nyinaku
 palu kurnta yungarra nyina+ku
 3SG shy oneself live+FUT

 mungata wartangka ngarringku.
 munga+ta warta+ngka ngarri+ngku
 night+LOC tree+LOC lie_down+PAST

It was shy and would live on its own and sleep on a tree at night time.
(Why the Kangaroo Hops)

15. Semblative suffix, *similar, like match, same, to be like*, **-piriny**

- 15.1. Nyimup**pirin**ypa.
nyimu+piriny+pa
dog+SEM+EMPH
Like a dog. (Wangkatja Grammar)
- 15.2. Wangkatja pirni nyangu tjirta tjungkurni pirni
wangkatja pirni nya+ngu tjirta tjungkurni pirni
person many look+PAST bird small many
- yulara wartangka tjirta pirni ma-tjapinu, "Yaaltji
yula+ra warta+ngka tjirta pirni ma_tjapi+nu yaaltji
cry+SER_VERB tree+LOC bird many away_ask+PAST why
- ngalipa yuntjulku tjirta purlkanya Karlaya**piriny**?"
ngalipa yuntju+lku tjirta purlka+nya karlaya+piriny
1PL angry+FUT bird big+focus_marker emu+SEM
The people saw the small birds crying on the trees and the Birds asked,
"Why are the big birds like Emus being angry at us?"
(Why The Emu Can't Fly)

16. Resultative suffix, *because of, as a result of*, **-nguru**

- 16.1. Tjana pikapungkulanyi puntukungurunku?
tjana pikapu+ngkulanyi puntu+ku+nguru+ngku
3PL fight+PRES_CONT man+DAT+RES+POSS
Are they fighting because of your man? (Fasola, 2010)

17. Negation suffix, *opposite meaning of a word*, **-munu**

- 17.1. Parltja**munu**rna.
parltja+munu+rna
full+NEG+1SG
I'm not full. (Speaker 1)
- 17.2. Kul**imunu**, wanti!
kuli+munu wanti
listen+NEG leave
Don't listen, leave it! (Speaker 1)
- 17.3. Papalu watjarnu, "Kaarnka! Walykumun**un**."
papa+lu watja+rnu kaarnka walyku+munu+n
dog+ERG say+PAST crow bad+NEG+2SG
The dog said, "Crow! You are not bad!" (Fasola, 2010)

18. Negative, *not*, **-wiya**

18.1. Puntu **tjitjiwiya**.
puntu tjitji+wiya
man child+not
The man is not a child. (KLCA)

18.2. Ngayu **tjitjiwiya**.
ngayu tjitji+wiya
1SG child+not
I'm not a child. (Wangkatja Grammar)

19. *Without, lacking, not having*, **-wiyatjarra**

19.1. Tjitji **mayiwiyatjarra** yulangu.
tjitji mayi_wiyatjarra yula+ngu
child food_without cry+PAST
The child was without food and he cried. (KLCA)

19.2. Yurltu**wiyatjarra** palu purtu kuliranyi.
yurltu_wiyatjarra palu purtu kuli+ranyi
car_without 3SG can't think+PRES
Without a car she can't think. (KLCA)

20. Kinship pair, **-rarra**

20.1. Kaparlir**rarra**.
kaparli+rarra
grandmother+kinship
Grandmother and grandchild. (KLCA)

20.2. Katjar**rarra**.
katja+rarra
son+kinship
Father and son. (KLCA)

Table of Wangkatja Noun Suffixes

Focus Marker	-nga, -nya	Semblative Suffix, similar, like match, same, to be like	-piriny, -pirinypa
Augmentative Suffix	-pa	Resultative Suffix, because of, as a result of	-ku, -nguru, -tjanu
Ergative Suffix, doer of an action	-lu, -tu, -tju	Negation Suffix, opposite meaning of a word	-munu
Dative Case Marker, purpose, for	-ku	Negative, not	-wiya
Possessive Suffix, have, have of	-ku	without, lacking, not having	-wiyatjarra
Proprietary Suffix, having	-tjarra	Kinship pair	-rarra
Comitative Suffix, with, togetherness	-tjarra		
Instrumental Suffix, with	-ngka, -ngku, -tjarra		
Ablative Suffix, from	-kutja, -nguru, -tjanu, -kurni		
Allative Suffix, directive, towards, to, hither	-kutu, -kati		
Locative Suffix, at, in, on	-ngka, -tja, -ta		

Conclusion

Wangkatja linguistic corpus contains 17 noun suffixes. The corpus does not contain nominaliser suffix to date.

List of Abbreviations

1SG – First person singular subject pronoun
2SG – Second person singular subject pronoun
3SG – Third person singular subject pronoun
3PL – Third person plural subject pronoun
IMP – Imperative
PRES – Present tense
PRES_CONT – Present continuous tense
FUT – Future tense
ABL – Ablative, from
AUGM – Augmentative, greater intensity
ALL – Allative, towards
COM – Comitative, with, together
DAT – Dative, for
EMPH – Emphatic, reinforcement
EPTH – Epenthetic, an additional sound
ERG – Ergative, the doer of the action
INST – Instrumental
INTR – Intransitive
LOC – Locative
NEG – Negative
POSS – Possessive
PROP – Propriative, with, having
PURP – Purposive
RES – Resultative
SEM – Semblative, similar
SER_VERB – Serial Verb

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