# English Learning Strategies of Thai vs. Vietnamese Exchange Practicum Students: A Case Study

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# Abstract

This research consisted of two purposes: 1) to investigate English learning strategies utilized by Thai vs. Vietnamese students, and 2) to explore relationships between English learning strategies used by Thai vs.Vietnamese students. The samples were 85 people including 42 second-year EFL English major students from Buriram Rajabhat University and 43 students from Hue University's EFL Vietnamese exchange practicum using the Toro Yamane Method (Yamane, 1973). Students enrolled in the English for Communication subject and were selected by purposive sampling method. The tool was the online questionnaire of SILL version 7.0 (Oxford, 1990). Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study found that high-level social and metacognitive



strategies were used by both Thai and Vietnamese students. Thai students used affective strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies, respectively while Vietnamese students used compensation strategies, cognitive strategies, affective strategies, and memory strategies, respectively.

Keywords: English learning strategies, Exchange practicum students, SILL, Thai vs. Vietnamese, Teaching English

# Introduction

In today's world, there are languages that people use over 5,000 languages around the world, and the language that is used the most is English, which is a universal language that people use to communicate in various areas such as economics, education, politics, government, and cultural exchange etc. Therefore, in developing countries, English education is important as Thailand is part of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN. In Thailand, started learning English since the reign of King Maha Vajiralongkorn King Mongkut's reign, 4<sup>th</sup>. The Ministry of Education has determined students to study English from kindergarten to high school with the period of learning the English language of Thai students over 10 years. But research found- that most students in Thailand still cannot use or communicate as well as they should in English.

According to Education First, the 2017 English language skills index was announced by the world-class English Language Institution (Yuktanan, 2017). The following is the study of the population's English language skills in 80 countries which do not use English as their primary language, and the findings are divided into five classes of nations: high, medium, low, and extremely low, which our Thai people were found to have poor English skills, ranked 64<sup>th</sup> in the world (from 88 countries around the world) and ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in Asian countries (from 21 nations) in which one year of Thai people fell to 11 in 2016 (Yuktanan, 2017).

Thus, Vietnam's education has three educational quality standards, namely 1) national leadership engagement, 2) in-depth courses, and 3) quality teachers, which significantly broaden the role of the country's top leaders in the education of the new generation. One of the few countries with farsighted leaders engaged in the preparing of the new generation. Such educational systems are also built for the students to feel deeply about each subject's key thought and skills. Vietnamese students have been more than checking through multiple choices by written review, so they have to read more than 60 books a year. All Vietnamese students are paying a lot of attention to studying and learning all the time to train themselves to be ASEAN citizens of quality. The Vietnamese government implements the five-level education system: pre-school, elementary, junior high school, senior high school, and vocational education. The Vietnamese government also supports the short training course on the labor market for people (Meuanpan, 2016). The testing English ability results of 21 countries in Asia in 2018, Vietnam was ranked to seventh while Thailand was sixteenth (Nardpradabt, 2018).

It is spoken, read, and written when the English language capacity is assessed. Thai people and Thai children will be ranked 53 in a total of 80 countries around the world where English is not a native language in everyday life and is the fifteenth of twenty counties in Asia. Although the test scores are better than neighboring countries like Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar, they have lost several countries in the same region, such as China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam, and if Indonesia and the Philippines are allergic (Ramangkura, 2018).

### Literature review

The researcher studied documents and research related to the research title English Learning Strategies of Thai vs. Vietnamese Exchange Practicum Students: A Case Study. Related research is as follows:



### 1. Definition of Language Learning Strategies

There were many definitions of the Language Learning Strategies according to their own ideas and beliefs, but in the provision of the various meanings will look like identical in two areas, namely the general characteristics of the learners and various techniques that learners used in learning, such as 1.1) techniques or tools that learners used in language learning (Rubin, 1987), 1.2) behavior patterns that can be observed and learners intend to used (Stern, 1983), 1.3) Any activities the learners perform to helped and made learning easier, faster, more fun, more selfdetermined, more effective, and can connect knowledge to new situations more (Oxford, 1989), 1.4) Methods or techniques used by students in learning a second language which may be an expression of behavior such as pronunciation of words new vocabulary loud to remember that vocabulary or may be an idea, such as using context or guess the meaning of new words, etc. (Ellis, 1997), 1.5) learning process that the students intend to be used (Cohen, 1988), and 1.6) methods or procedures that make learning easy or more convenient is intentional and caused learning goals of the students themselves (Chamot, 2005).

### 2. The Importance of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies were important for learning English as follows: 2. 1) was a tool for developing communication ability (Communicative Competence) of learners (Lessard-Clouston, 1997) because language learning strategies are self-limiting participation tools, and this tool is necessary for the development of communication ability (Oxford, 1990), 2.2) A clear goal in helping learners improved their English language knowledge (Cohen, 1995) helped learners determine their own direction or learning methods. Self-directed, in which these characteristics do not required students to have instructors to give advice, especially when using language outside the classroom (Oxford, 1990), 2.3) Language learning strategies were important to learning English for two reasons: (1) The study of the learning strategies used by the students while teaching and learning so that the teachers understand Language learning process in met cognitive, cognitive, social and affective (2) able to train students with low grades, use learning strategies to improve their language better (Chamot, 2005). For this reason, if a language teacher studies the use of language learning strategies of students at succeed in studying and suggest suitable learning strategies for learners who do not experience success, these learners will be able to develop their own language learning (Vajasat, 1990).

# 3. Types of English Language Learning Strategies

There were many types of language learning strategies mentioned below. Stern (1983) states that there were four basic strategies for good language learners: 3.1) Active planning strategy, learners choose their learning goals steps and participation in the learning process, 3.2) Explicit learning strategy learners pay attention to the linguistic characteristics of the language they learn by revealing or recognizing memory, and control their progress, and 3.3) Social learning strategy, students were trying to find opportunities to communicated in the language learning community that used that language to develop strategies to communicate and participate in the language actually, and 3.4) Affective strategy learners, participate in activities that resemble good attitudes, build morale, fight against obstacles, and solve emotional and motivation problems.

Rubin (1981) divided the learning strategies into two groups: The groups that help create direct learning and the groups that make indirect learning helps groups to learn directly. There are six strategies as follows: 1) Clarification, verification were to asked and got examples of words or expressions, 2) Guessing, inducing, inferencing were the used of context or words in other phrases or sentences words, key or sentences to guessed the meaning, 3) Deductive reasoning were summarized grammar rules using a comparison group on the end of a word, the same is true, 4) Practice were trying a new word alone or in combination with other words or practicing with mirror, 5) Memorization were to write down new words alone or in the context, 6) Monitoring were to corrected pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and the styles of oneself and others.

The group that indirectly has two strategies are as follows: 1) Creative opportunity for practice were an attempt to chatted with a friend, teacher,





foreigners who use English language or think of simulations to practice or test the use of language, 2) Production tricks were motivation or commitment to communicated by repeating the words to better understanding.

Oxford (1990) divided into two large groups, learning strategies, as well as Rubin (1981) by the studying techniques of direct strategies on strategies to indirect strategies as follows: 1) Direct Strategies were divided into three sub-groups as follows: (1.1) Memory Strategies were the creation of thought-related links such as grouping, association, relationship, or placing new words into the context, etc., (1.2) Cognitive Strategies were practice, such as repeated training, training audio, or writing systematically, analysis, and construction of structures, etc., (1.3) Compensation Strategies was a logical guess, such as the used of linguistic features, or other things to help guess, 2) Indirect Strategies were divided into three subgroups as follows: (2.1) Metacognitive strategies was to define learning as a center, such as reviewing, or linking prior knowledge, attention study planning, self-evaluation etc., (2.2) Affective Strategies were to reduced anxiety, self-encouragement, the transfer of feelings to others etc., (2.3) Social Strategies were asking questions, collaborating with others, sympathizing with other people, or friends.

In this research, the researchers choose to divide the types of Oxford (1990) because they cover the various issues proposed by many educators. In addition, Oxford (1990) also offers a questionnaire for English language learning strategies study abroad as well.

# **Research Objectives**

1. To investigate English learning strategies utilized by Thai vs.

Vietnamese students

2. To explore relationships between English learning strategies used by Thai vs. Vietnamese students

# Methodology

### 1. Research Design

Quantitative data statistics were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

# 2. Population and Samples

# 2.1 Population

The total of population used in this research were 108 students including EFL second-year English major students, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Buriram Rajabhat University in the academic year 2018 and EFL Vietnamese exchange practicum students of Hue University – University of Foreign Languages.

# 2.2 Sample groups

The samples of the investigation were 85 people determined by utilizing the Taro Yamane Formula (Yamane, 1973. Buriram Rajabhat University's 42 second-year EFL English major students, and Hue University's 43 EFL Vietnamese practicum exchange students who have already enrolled in the field of English for Communication. They were selected using a purposive sampling method.

# 2.3 Variables

The Independent variables were Thai vs. Vietnamese students (EFL). Dependent variables were measured assessment by SILL questionnaire.

# 2.4 Area of the research

Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand's area of this study. The duration for this research is from 1 June – 30 September 2019.

# 2.5 Content of the research

The scope of this research focuses on Thai vs. Vietnamese students' English learning strategies in the following topics 1) the education strategies for learning English, 2) the difference of English learning strategies, and 3) strategies Inventory of Language Learning (SILL).

2.6 Definitions of Key Term

*2.6.1 English learning strategies* refers to the guidelines or instructions for studying Thai vs. Vietnamese English.

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2. 6. 2 Thai students refers to the EFL second year students who are studying in English major, Faculty of Humanities and Social sciences in the academic year 2018 at Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand.

2. 6 3 Vietnamese students refers to the EFL Vietnamese exchange practicum students who are studying in English major of Hue University - University of Foreign Languages, Vietnam.

2. 6. 4 Buriram Rajabhat University (BRU) refers to an open advanced education non-profit organization based in the medium-sized town of Buriram (10,000-49,999 inhabitants in the population), Thailand.

2.6.5 *Hue University - University of Foreign Languages (HU-UFL)* refers to the departments of all affiliated universities of Hue University in Hue City, Vietnam, merged with the University of Languages founded on July 13, 2004.

2.6.6 *SILL* refers to the Language Learning Strategies Inventory, version 7.0 created by Oxford (1990).

# 3. Instrument(s) and Procedures

SILL: Questionnaires Version 7.0 of Strategies Inventory of Language Learning developed by Rebecca Oxford (Oxford, 1990), which has been checking the quality of the instrument. Tryout runs with 30 EFL students, except the samples. Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) coefficient by item and the overall questionnaire was equal to 0.96 period of September 2019.

# 4. Data Collection

The researchers developed an online questionnaire using Google Form of SILL 7.0 (Oxford, 1990). The SILL uses five-Point Likert-scale responses for each strategy (Likert, 1967);

Mea	ning	Opinion Levels
1	means	Never or almost never true of me
2	means	Usually not true of me
3	means	Somewhat true of me
4	means	Usually true of me
5	means	Always or almost always true of me
3 4 5	means	Somewhat true of me Usually true of me

### 5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data statistics were analyzed using the percentage (%) Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD). Researchers usually discerned three strategic usage levels based on Oxford (1990) recommended frequency ranges.

# Results

Table 1

Dorto	<u> </u>		Tha	ais	Vietnamese			
Parts	Strategies	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings	
1	Memory	3.26	0.78	Uncertain	3.49	0.96	Strongly agree	
	Strategies							
2	Cognitive	3.24	0.78	Uncertain	3.65	0.96	Strongly agree	
	Strategies							
3	Compensation	3.22	0.82	Uncertain	3.71	0.91	Strongly agree	
	Strategies							
4	Metacognitive	3.36	0.83	Uncertain	3.88	0.86	Strongly agree	
	Strategies							
5	Affective	3.32	0.82	Uncertain	3.57	0.95	Strongly agree	
	Strategies							
6	Social	3.52	0.93	Strongly	3.90	0.97	Strongly agree	
	Strategies			agree				
	Total	3.32	0.83	Uncertain	3.70	0.94	Strongly agree	

*Note:* M = mean; SD = standard deviation

From table 1; the total of six parts of SILL, Thais used social strategies (M= 3.52, SD= 0.93) the most, metacognitive strategies (M= 3.36, SD= 0.83), affective strategies (M= 3.32, SD= 0.82), memory strategies (M= 3.26, SD= 0.78), cognitive strategies (M= 3.24, SD= 0.78), and compensation strategies (M= 3.22, SD= 0.82) respectively. Vietnamese used social strategies (M= 3.90, SD= 0.97) the most, metacognitive strategies (M= 3.88, SD= 0.86), compensation strategies (M= 3.71, SD= 0.91), cognitive strategies (M= 3.65, SD= 0.96), affective strategies

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( M= 3.57, SD= 0.95), and memory strategies ( M= 3.49, SD= 0.96) respectively.

#### Table 2

T	<u>Ototoma ante</u>		Tha	ais	Vietnamese		
Items	Statements	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings
3	I connect the sound of a new SL word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.	3.38	0.76	Uncertain	3.65	0.97	Strongly agree
1	I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in the SL.	3.45	0.74	Uncertain	3.53	0.83	Strongly agree
2	I use new SL words in a sentence so I can remember them.	3.33	0.85	Uncertain	3.93	0.91	Strongly agree

The Items Used to Identify High Memory Strategies

From table 2, Thai students were talked about the connections between what they already known and new things they learned in the SL (M=3.45, SD=0.74) for memory strategies. They associate the sound of a new SL words and an image of the word to help them remember the word (M=3.38, SD=0.76), and remember new SL words or phrases by recalling their position on the screen, on the wall, or on a street sign (M= 3.36, SD=0.91). Thus Vietnamese students used new SL words in a sentence so that they can identify them (M= 3.93, SD= 0.91), they also revisited SL lessons (M= 3.77, SD= 0.92), and recall new SL words or phrases by recalling their location on the paper, on the board, or on the street sign (M=3.67, SD=0.94).

т.		Thais			Vietnamese		
Items	Statements	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings
11	I try to talk like	3.52	0.80	Strongly	3.88	0.91	Strongly
	native SL speakers.			agree			agree
15	I watch SL	3.48	0.89	Uncertain	3.84	1.07	Strongly
	language TV						agree
	shows spoken in						
	SL or go to movies						
	spoken in SL.						
12	I practice the	3.45	0.92	Uncertain	4.02	0.94	Strongly
	sounds of SL.						agree

#### The Items Used to Grade High Cognitive Strategies

For cognitive strategies, from table 3, Thai students try to speak like native SL speakers (M=3.52, SD=0.80), watch SL language television shows spoken in SL or go to SL movies (M=3.48, SD=0.89) and practice SL sounds (M=3.45, SD=0.92) respectively. While Vietnamese students practice SL sounds (M=4.02, SD=0.94), they tried to speak as native SL speakers (M=3.88, SD=0.91) and watched SL language television shows spoken in SL or go to SL (M=3.84, SD=1.07) movies respectively.



Transa	<u>States and a</u>	Thais			Vietnamese		
Items	Statements	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings
28	I try to guess what the other person will say next in the SL.	3.36	0.79	Uncertain	3.77	0.81	Strongly agree
25	When I can't think of a word during a conversation in the SL, I use gestures.	3.26	0.91	Uncertain	3.86	0.92	Strongly agree
27	I read SL without looking up every new word	3.21	0.81	Uncertain	3.37	1.05	Uncertain

#### The Items Used to List Strong Strategies for Compensation

By table 4, Thai students tried to guess what the other person will say next in the SL (M=3.36, SD=0.81), when they can't think of a word during a SL conversation, Thai students used gestures (M= 3.26, SD= 0.91), and to understand foreign SL words, Thai students make guesses (M= 3.21, SD=0.78) respectively. Thus Vietnamese students if they can't think of an SL word, they used a word or phrase that means the same thing (M=3.88, SD=0.93), when they can't think of a word in the SL conversation, they used gestures (M= 3.86, SD=0.792), and they made guesses (M= 3.79, SD=0.83) respectively.

T.			Tha	is	Vietnamese			
Items	Statements	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings	
31	I notice my SL mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	3.45	0.80	Uncertain	3.98	0.89	Strongly agree	
32	I pay attention when someone is speaking SL.	3.43	0.86	Uncertain	4.05	0.95	Strongly agree	
33	I try to find out how to be a better learner of SL.	3.40	0.86	Uncertain	4.02	0.86	Strongly agree	

#### The Items Used to Grade Strong Strategies for Metacognitive

From table 5, for metacognitive strategies students in Thailand noted their SL errors and use this information to help them do better (M= 3.45, SD=0.80), pay attention when someone talks SL (M=3.43, SD=0.86), and think about their success in learning SL (M=3.40, SD=0.77) respectively. Moreover Vietnamese students paid attention when someone talks SL (M=4.05, SD=0.95), they are trying to find out how to be a better SL learner (M=4.02, SD=0.86), and they are curious about their success in SL learning (M=3.98, SD=0.80) respectively.



<b>T</b> .			Tha	is		Vietnamese		
Items	Statements	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings	
41	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in SL.	3.50	0.89	Strongly agree	3.44	0.85	Uncertain	
42	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using SL.	3.48	0.77	Uncertain	3.77	0.97	Strongly agree	
39	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using SL.	3.36	0.69	Uncertain	3.84	0.87	Strongly agree	

#### The Items Used to Grade Strong Strategies for Affective

From table 6, Thai students gave themselves a reward or treatment for their affective strategies when they are doing well in SL (M=3.50, SD=0.89), note if they are stressed or anxious when learning or using SL (M=3.48, SD= 0.77), and try to relax whenever they were afraid of using SL (M=3.36, SD=0.69) respectively. Thus Vietnamese students encouraged them to speak SL even when they're afraid to make a mistake (M=4.05, SD= 0.75), they tried to relax whenever they were afraid to use SL (M= 3.84, SD= 0.87) and saw if they were stressed or nervous when learning or using SL (M=3.77, SD=0.97) respectively.

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#### Table 7

<b>T</b> .		Thais			Vietnamese		
Items	Statements	М	SD	Meanings	М	SD	Meanings
45	If I do not understand something in SL, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.	3.67	0.98	Strongly agree	4.09	0.97	Strongly agree
46	I ask SL speakers to correct me when I talk.	3.64	0.88	Strongly agree	3.70	1.08	Strongly agree
50	I try to learn about the culture of SL speakers.	3.64	0.85	Strongly agree	4.26	0.76	Strongly agree

#### The Items Used to Grade Strong Strategies for Social

For social strategies, Thai students from table 7, if they don't understand something in SL, asked the other person to slow down or say it again (M= 3.67, SD= 0.98), tried to learn about the culture of SL speakers (M=3.64, SD=0.76), and asked SL speakers to correct them when they speak (M=3.64, SD=0.88) respectively. Thus Vietnamese students tried to learn about SL speaker culture (M= 4.26, SD= 0.85), if they don't understand anything in SL, asked the other person to slow down or say it again (M=4.09, SD=0.97), and asked questions in SL (M=3.84, SD=0.87) respectively.



# Discussion

The following sections identify and analyze the study and survey findings in the following order of use of the six categories: Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social categories. To facilitate it easier for these students to investigate and survey the use of language learning strategies. At the same time, the results of second year Thai students in English (EFL) and Vietnamese students in exchange practicum (EFL) are discussed. The outcome showed that both students from Thailand and Vietnam used the most social strategies and metacognitive strategies. Like Khamkhien (2011), Thais and Vietnamese students made the most use of compensation strategies and ranked fourth in the social strategies. While it was second for Vietnamese students and Thai students, the third used metacognitive strategies for both Thai and Vietnamese. The results of the six categories are as follows:

# 1. Memory Strategies

For Thai students, this strategy was placed in the fourth, while for Vietnamese students it was placed in the sixth. Thai students consider connections between what they definitely know and new things they learn in the subsequent language and they associate the sound of another SL word and a picture or image of the word to assist them with recalling the word. Vietnamese students utilize new SL words in a sentence so they can remember them and they audit SL exercises regularly. Something very similar for both Thai vs. Vietnamese remember new second language words or expressions by recollecting their area on the page, on the board, or on a road sign.

# 2. Cognitive Strategies

This strategy was positioned in the fifth for Thai students, while it was positioned fourth for Vietnamese students. Both Thai vs. Vietnamese students attempt to talk like native second-language speakers, they practice the hints of the subsequent language and watch second language TV shows communicated in the subsequent language or head out to films communicated in the subsequent language.

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#### 3. Compensation Strategies

This strategy was positioned sixth for Thai students and was positioned third for Vietnamese students. Thai students attempt to think about what the other individual will say next in the second language. Vietnamese students on the off chance that they can't consider second language word, they will utilize a word or expression that implies something very similar. However, both Thai and Vietnamese students make conjectures to comprehend new second language words and when they can't think about a word during a discussion in the subsequent language, they use motions.

#### 4. Metacognitive Strategies

This strategy was positioned second for both Thai vs. Vietnamese students. Thai students notice their subsequent language missteps and utilize that data to assist them with improving, while Vietnamese students attempt to discover how to be a superior student of the subsequent language; however, both Thai vs. Vietnamese students focus when somebody is communicating in the second language and consider their advancement in learning the subsequent language.

#### 5. Affective Strategies

This strategy was positioned third for Thai students, while it was positioned fifth for Vietnamese students. Both of Thai vs. Vietnamese students attempt to unwind at whatever point they feel terrified of utilizing the second language and notice on the off chance that they are tense or apprehensive when they are examining or utilizing the subsequent language; however Thai students give themselves a prize or treat when they do well in the second language, while Vietnamese students urge themselves to communicate in the subsequent language in any event, when they fear to commit an error.

#### 6. Social Strategies

This strategy was utilized the most by Thai vs. Vietnamese students, and it was positioned first. Both Thai and Vietnamese students attempt to find out about the way of life of second language speakers and If they don't comprehend something in the subsequent language, they request that the



other individual lull or state it once more; however, Thai students ask second language speakers to address them when they talk, while Vietnamese students pose inquiries in the subsequent language.

# Recommendations

Some proposals for future research are suggested as follows:

# 1. Implications

1.1The discover will introduce to our students the characteristics of good learners and the language learning strategies of good learners, and seek to improve their understanding and use of these strategies. Therefore we give our students the widest possible selection of diverse and multiple language learning strategies.

1.2 The discover suffocating from past research uncovered that numerous factors were interrelated with the utilization of language learning strategies by the students. As researchers, we will likewise try to investigate the connection between every factor and utilize various techniques to utilize language learning strategies. When performing different analyses, we ought to likewise cautiously examine how these factors influence the language learning strategies of our student, and what different factors may impact their utilization of language learning systems.

1.3 While the effects of strategy training on language learning are not yet entirely definitive, the beneficial effects of language learning strategies have been confirmed by several studies. Such results show the need for ESL/ EFL learners to be given strategy instruction.

### 2. Further Studies

2. 1 This research collected the data when the Vietnamese exchange practicum students went back to Vietnam, so we got the data slowly thus the future research should collect the data while the Vietnamese exchange practicum students are apprenticing at Buriram Rajabhat University for getting faster data.



2.2 This research used only the quantitative research form as the main tool for data collection. Future research may use the mix research methods together to get more complete data.

2.3 This research had investigated and surveyed English learning strategies of Thai students and Vietnamese students. The future research should investigate and survey with students from other countries at Buriram Rajabhat University such as Chinese or Cambodian students etc.

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