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## **Constructing Nature through Language: A Corpus-Based Comparative Analysis of Written and Spoken Discourse on Penguins**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study presents a corpus-based comparative analysis of written and spoken discourse on penguins to investigate how language constructs representations of marine wildlife across modalities. Drawing on seven books (written corpus) and twenty-nine documentary transcripts from multiple channels (spoken corpus), the research adopts a mixed-method approach combining quantitative frequency analysis with qualitative interpretation. The findings reveal significant register variation between written and spoken data. The written corpus demonstrates high lexical density, with frequent use of content nouns such as penguin, species, population, colonies, and Antarctic, reflecting scientific classification and ecological orientation. Verbs such as breeding, hatching, and monitoring emphasize biological processes, while technical adjectives such as genetic and non-breeding indicate descriptive precision. In contrast, the spoken corpus features more dynamic verbs including hunt, swim, fight, and grow, highlighting movement and survival. Adjectives such as cold, giant, hungry, and wild contribute to emotional engagement and narrative dramatization. The unexpected prominence of words like music further reflects documentary production elements. Overall, written discourse constructs penguins as ecological and scientific entities, whereas spoken discourse frames them within action-driven survival narratives. The study contributes to corpus linguistics, register analysis, and ecolinguistics by demonstrating how linguistic patterns shape public understanding of wildlife across genres and modalities.

**Keywords:** Corpus Linguistics; Register Variation; Ecolinguistics; Wildlife Discourse; Penguins

### **Introduction**

This study is about the corpus. The researcher is making a corpus on an animal which named a 'penguin'. The researcher actually wants to know about the history and details of penguins. This study's main focus is to know how people talk about the penguins in written or spoken. Penguins are birds that travel best by swimming, as neither male nor female penguins are able to fly. There are 17 species of penguins, according to eearth.org. They vary in size, depending on species, the emperor penguin being the



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largest. Most of the physical characteristics of penguins vary based on species as opposed to gender. Penguins have no external genitalia. Males and females can sometimes be hard to distinguish, even as adults. Often, examining a penguin's chromosomes or internal organs is the only way to tell whether a penguin to be male or female with any degree of certainty. Male and female penguins do not differ much when it comes to appearance. It may not be possible to tell the two apart without any indications from their behavior. A penguin's appearance acts as camouflage. Their coloring and feathers make them harder to see by both predators and prey when they are swimming. The way penguin's court can vary among species, but there are similarities despite the difference in breeding seasons and habitats of the various species. Male penguins are typically the ones that establish the nest. They do this before they search for a mate. It is the female, not the male, that chooses who they mate with each season. Penguins are specialized marine birds adapted to living at sea. There are many types of species of penguins but some of them 18 species of penguin, only the emperor and the Adélie can really claim to call the Antarctic continent their true home. Others such as the chinstrap, gentoo and macaroni breed on the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula, where conditions are less harsh, and often take to the sea or ride the ice northwards. Some species spend as much as 75% of their lives in the sea only coming ashore for breeding and molting. Penguins generally live on islands and remote continental regions free from land predators, where their inability to fly is not detrimental to their survival. These highly specialized marine birds are adapted to living at sea — some species spend months at a time at sea. Penguins are usually found near nutrient-rich, cold-water currents that provide an abundant supply of food. Different species thrive in varying climates, ranging from Galápagos penguins on tropical islands at the equator to emperor penguins restricted to the pack ice and waters of Antarctica. The seasons of the Southern Hemisphere are opposite those of the Northern Hemisphere. When continents above the equator experience spring and summer, the areas below the equator experience fall and winter. The most southerly penguin colony in the world are a group of Adélie's that regularly nest near Camp Royd's, Antarctica. The family Spheniscidae of aquatic flightless birds, or Sphenisciformes, includes penguins. They are nearly entirely distributed in the Southern Hemisphere; the only species found north of the equator is the Galápagos penguin. Penguins have counter-shaded dark and white plumage and flippers for swimming, making them exceptionally well-adapted for living in ocean water. If we talked about the food of penguins they eat Silverfish, lantern fish, sprats, pilchards, mullets, anchovies, sardines, cod, opal fish, and other small fish these are the majority of most penguins' diets. Most penguins catch food with their bills and swallow it whole while swimming, including krill, fish, squid, and other types of marine life. Depending on the species of penguins—each of which has slightly varied food preferences—their diet changes slightly. This lessens interspecies rivalry. This lessens interspecies rivalry. The smaller kinds of penguins found in the Antarctic and the sub Antarctic mostly eat krill and squid. The strong jaws and spiky tongue of a penguin allow it to grasp slick prey. About half of their lives are spent in the ocean and the other half on land. There are 18 different types of penguins, and 5 of them reside in Antarctica. On sub Antarctic



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islands, there are four more species. The emperor penguin (*Aptenodytes forsteri*), which stands approximately 1.1 m (3 ft 7 in) tall and weighs 35 kg (77 lb.), is the largest living animal. The little blue penguin (*Eudyptula minor*), commonly referred to as the fairy penguin, is the smallest species of penguin. It is about 30-33 cm (12-13 in) tall and weighs 1.2-1.3 kg (2.6-2.9 lb.). Nowadays, larger penguins typically live in colder areas, whereas smaller penguins live in tropical or temperate climates. Some extinct penguin species were gigantic; they could have reached adult human heights or weights. In the Late Eocene, when the climate was noticeably warmer than it is today, there was a significant diversity of species in sub Antarctic regions and at least one enormous species in a location located about 2,000 km south of the equator. Adult penguins of most species usually disperse from rookeries (nesting colonies) to feed in coastal waters. Adelie penguins in the southernmost breeding colonies in the Ross Sea migrate as much as 17,600 km (10,936 mi.) each year. Young birds usually disperse when they leave their colonies and may wander thousands of kilometers. They generally return to the colonies where they were hatched to molt and breed. According to some animal experts, the penguin is one of the most streamlined animals in the world. A penguin's body is tapered at both ends and it has a large head, short neck and elongated body. This streamlined design helps penguins swim fast.

### Literature Review

Corpus linguistics has emerged as a powerful methodological approach for investigating patterns of language use across large bodies of naturally occurring texts. Rather than relying on intuition, corpus-based studies analyze authentic linguistic data to identify frequency patterns, collocations, concordance lines, and register variation (Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998; McEnery & Hardie, 2012). Through quantitative and qualitative techniques, corpus linguistics enables researchers to explore how meaning is constructed across genres and modalities.

One important area within corpus linguistics is the comparison of written and spoken discourse. Research has demonstrated that written texts typically exhibit higher lexical density, greater noun frequency, and more complex syntactic structures, while spoken discourse tends to contain more interactive verbs, pronouns, and evaluative language (Biber et al., 1999). Such variation reflects differences in communicative purposes, production constraints, and audience expectations (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Therefore, comparing written and spoken corpora provides insight into how knowledge and experience are differently constructed across modalities.

The representation of nature and animals in discourse has also attracted scholarly attention, particularly within ecolinguistics. Ecolinguistics examines how language shapes our understanding of ecological relationships and environmental issues (Stibbe, 2015). Studies show that lexical choices influence the framing of animals either as scientific entities, commodities, companions, or symbols (Goatly, 2002). Corpus methods have increasingly been employed in ecolinguistic research to identify recurring patterns in environmental narratives (Baker et al., 2008).

Wildlife documentaries and educational books serve as important media through which public perceptions of animals are formed. Documentaries often incorporate narrative, emotive language, and dramatic framing to engage viewers (Montgomery, 2007). In contrast, written scientific texts emphasize classification, population data, and ecological terminology. Such distinctions suggest that spoken documentary discourse may



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foreground action verbs and evaluative adjectives, whereas written discourse may prioritize taxonomic nouns and technical vocabulary.

Despite extensive research in corpus linguistics and ecolinguistics, limited studies have focused specifically on the linguistic representation of penguins across modalities. Given the ecological and symbolic importance of penguins in Antarctic discourse, a comparative corpus-based investigation offers valuable insight into how language constructs marine wildlife across written and spoken genres.

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this study, the researcher took seven books for the collection of data. Those books are related to the penguins. The researcher also took 29 documentaries transcription from almost 15 channels which are related to penguins. Through these books and documentaries or transcription, the researcher got the data and details of how people talk about the penguins in written or spoken which is mentioned below in Tables 1 and 2. In this study, the researcher used a mixed method for making a corpus.

All the spoken data and details are mentioned in Table 1. The documentaries, channels, etc. are mentioned below. Table 1 represents the spoken data.

### **Table 1**

*Spoken Data Table*



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	Channels Names	Documentaries Names	Publish Date	Retrieval Date	Duration	Time	Day	Word
1.	BBC Earth	Penguin chicks rescued by unlikely hero- Spy in the Snow	28 Dec 2018	19 Aug 2023	3:47 mints	7:22 AM	Sat	250
	-----	Baby Penguins First Steps – 4K UHD Dynasties	23 Feb 2022	19 Aug 2023	4:13 mints	7:30 AM	Sat	162
	-----	How An Egg Becomes A Baby Penguin – Animals: The Inside Story	17 Sep 2011	20 Aug 2023	3:57 mints	12:30 PM	Sun	433
	-----	Penguins Survival Skills You Don't Know About	14 Nov 2018	19 Aug 2023	11:00 mints	7:15 AM	Sat	569
	-----	Baby Penguins Dodges Predators - Snow Chick: A Penguin's Tale	26 Dec 2021	19 Aug 2023	5:36 mints	7:32 AM	Sat	340
	-----	Baby Penguin Transfer - Snow Chick: A Penguin's Tale	12 Dec 2021	19 Aug 2023	4:41 mints	7:40 AM	Sat	303
	-----	Penguins Races to Feed Her Starving Chick - Snow Chick: A Penguin's Tale	11 Dec 2021	19 Aug 2023	4:46 mints	8:01 AM	Sat	255
	-----	Baby Penguins Escapes Kidnap - Snow Chick	25 Dec 2021	19 Aug 2023	2:30 mints	8:15 AM	Sat	181
	-----	Fighting Over Abandoned Penguin Chick - Natural World: Penguins Of The Antarctic	19 Dec 2020	19 Aug 2023	5:10 mints	9:00 AM	Sat	420
	-----	Penguins Polished off by the Pumas - Big cats	18 Aug 2023	20 Aug 2023	4:25 mints	11:30 AM	Sun	111
	-----	Baby Penguins Loses Parents - 4K UHD- Seven World's One Planet	11 Apr 2023	20 Aug 2023	4:16 mints	11:36 AM	Sun	160
	-----	Emperor Penguins Fight Over Mate	20 Dec 2018	20 Aug 2023	2:48 mints	11:00 AM	Sun	121
	-----	Best of Penguins- Top 5	21 Dec 2019	22 Aug 2023	17:03 mints	7:00 AM	Tue	1081



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	-----	Penguins Huddle To keep Their Eggs Warm – Natural World: Penguins Of The Antarctica	15 Dec 2020	22 Aug 2023	4:53 mints	7:28 AM	Tu e	440
2.	National Geographic	Go Inside an Antarctica ‘City’ of 40,000 King Penguins – EP. 4 – Wildlife: Resurrection Island	25 Oct 2018	23 Aug 2023	9:25 mints	3:19 PM	We d	889
3.	Animal Planet	The Penguins From The Bronx Zoo Are Just Too Cute! – Zoo	27 Sep 2020	22 Aug 2023	10:19 mints	4:04 PM	Tu e	1508
4.	BBC	How does a Penguin launch itself from the sea? – The Wonder of Animals	7 Aug 2014	22 Aug 2023	4:27 mints	4:18 PM	Tu e	389
5.	Free Documenta ry Nature	South Georgia- Penguin Paradise of the South Atlantic	29 May 2020	26 Aug 2023	48:52 mints	7:00 PM	Sat	3305
6.	Best Documenta ry	Penguin Baywatch- Wildlife Documentary	26 Apr 2017	26 Aug 2023	51:57 mints	7:10 PM	Sat	2639
7.	Go Wild	Antarctica- Tales from the End of the World	15 Feb 2023	17 Aug 2023	51:43 mints	7:20 PM	Th u	3960
	-----	Penguins- Wild About 11/13 - Go Wild	6 May 2022	17 Aug 2023	24:35 mints	7:45 PM	Th u	3868
	-----	Falklands Islands: Penguins Paradise - Wildest Islands	20 Mar 2023	21 Aug 2023	52:02 mints	10:0 0 PM	Mo n	3764
8.	Real Wild	The Sub- Zero World Of Penguins (Wildest Documentary) Wild About Real About	15 Aug 2020	21 Aug 2023	23:56 mints	11:0 2 PM	Mo n	3208
9.	Our World	The Falklands Rockhopper Penguin: The most Comical Of Penguins	26 Jan 2022	21 Aug 2023	51:07 mints	11:4 5 PM	Mo n	3861
10.	Documenta ry Online	Penguins- National Geographic Documentary	27 Jan 2021	18 Aug 2023	46:36 mints	7:52 PM	Fri	4248
11.	Get factual	Penguin Central: Full	3 Feb	25 Aug	50:15	9:05	Fri	3660



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		Nature Documentary	2022	2023	mints	PM		
12.	MBC Life	Life of Penguins – Tears of the Antarctica EP 01, # 02	29 Apr 2013	25 Aug 2023	12:38 mints	12:04 PM	Fri	924
13.	RNZ	Korora: Little Blue Penguin – Documentary	15 Aug 2022	25 Aug 2023	30:25 mints	1:15 PM	Fri	3743
14.	Holman Girl	BBC Documentary 2015 National geographic animals Penguins Documentary Animal	10 Dec 2016	23 Aug 2023	52:30 mints	2:30 PM	We d	4899

This table presents detailed metadata of the spoken corpus derived from documentary transcripts. It includes channel names, documentary titles, publication and retrieval dates, duration, time and day of collection, and word counts. The table demonstrates the diversity of sources and the substantial volume of spoken data collected. It ensures transparency and replicability of corpus compilation.

**Table 2**

*Written Data Table*

	Authors Names	Books Names	Publish Date	Retrieval Date	Word Count	Pages
1.	Daniel Gilpin	Penguins	2004	2023	3147	40
2.	Jean Marzollo	Pierre the Penguin: A True Story	2010	2023	421	26
3.	Frankie Stout	Penguins Nature's Coolest Birds	2018	2023	1311	32
4.	Florence Atwater and Richard Atwater	Mr. Poppers Penguins	1938	2023	2457	77
5.	Pablo Garcia Borboroglu and P. Dee Boersma	Penguins Natural History and Conservation	2013	2023	101281	337
6.	Richard Spilsbury and Lousie A Spilsbury	Watching Penguins in Antarctica	2006	2023	892	36
7.	Annette Barkhausen and Franz Geiser	Penguins	1994	2023	10491	56

This table lists the books used to compile the written corpus, including authors, publication dates, retrieval dates, word counts, and page numbers. The inclusion of both



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literary and scientific texts ensures genre variation within the written corpus. It reflects the breadth and credibility of written data sources.

**Table 3**

*Written Data Table With Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives And Their Frequencies*

	<b>Nouns</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Verbs</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1.	Antarctic	239	Breed	116	Early	124
2.	Penguin	601	Observed	40	Southern	177
3.	Island	560	Dive	36	Stable	46
4.	Species	484	Find	23	Better	20
5.	Population	423	Tell	2	Abundant	16
6.	Chicks	378	Want	6	Thick	16
7.	Colonies	324	See	80	Cool	10
8.	Eggs	257	Lay	54	Artificial	6
9.	Ice	131	Relay	4	Terrible	2
10.	Snares	122	Help	18	Non- Breeding	25
11.	Days	202	Impact	81	Genetic	20
12.	Nest	192	Hatching	59		
13.	Molt	198	Laying	57		
14.	Prey	173	Molting	54		
15.	Food	167	Feeding	47		
16.	Little	144	Feed	51		
17.	Fish	137	Brooding	46		
18.	Period	119	Monitoring	45		
19.	Marine	112	Fledging	37		
20.	Ring	6	Living	28		
21.	Table	111	Harvest	18		
22.	Young	67	Mating	14		
23.	Popper	55	Growing	13		
24.	Seabirds	52	Returning	13		
25.	Habitat	87	Flying	12		
26.	Colony	137	Breeding	803		
27.	Season	109	Reading	8		
28.	Time	157	Timing	23		
29.	Populations	147				
30.	Climate	93				
31.	Australia	64				
32.	Humboldt	73				
33.	Birdlife	50				

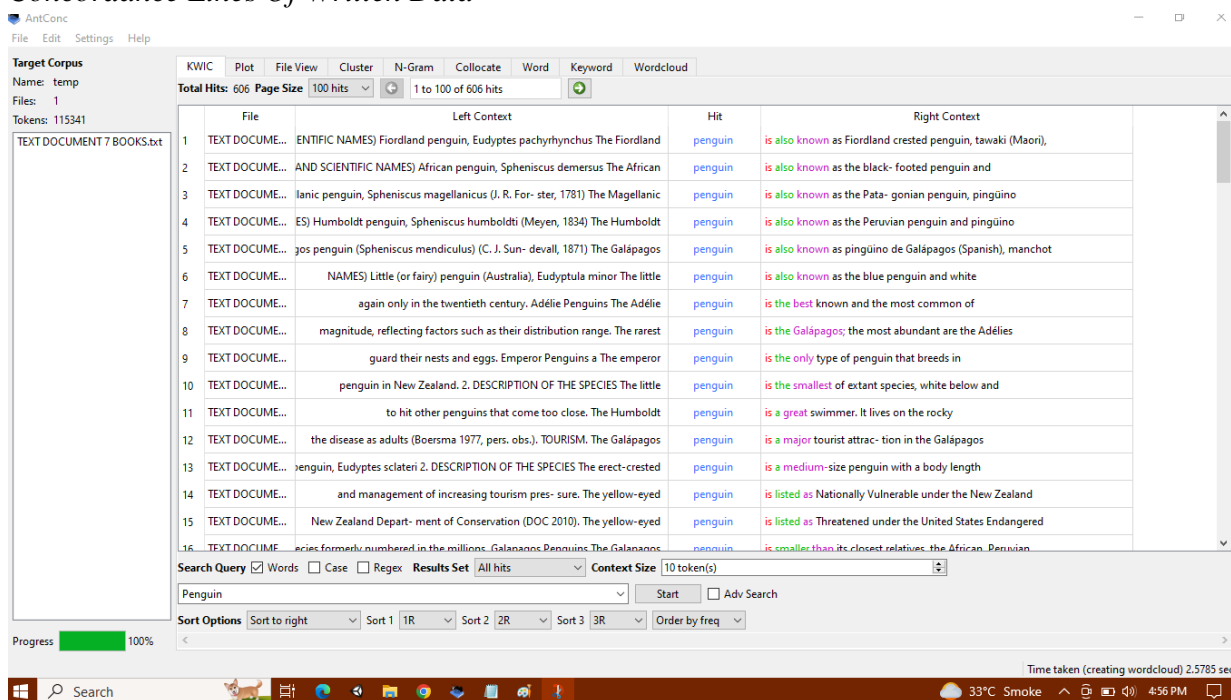


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34.	Success	107				
35.	Winter	102				
36.	Ocean	96				
37.	Mammalian	15				

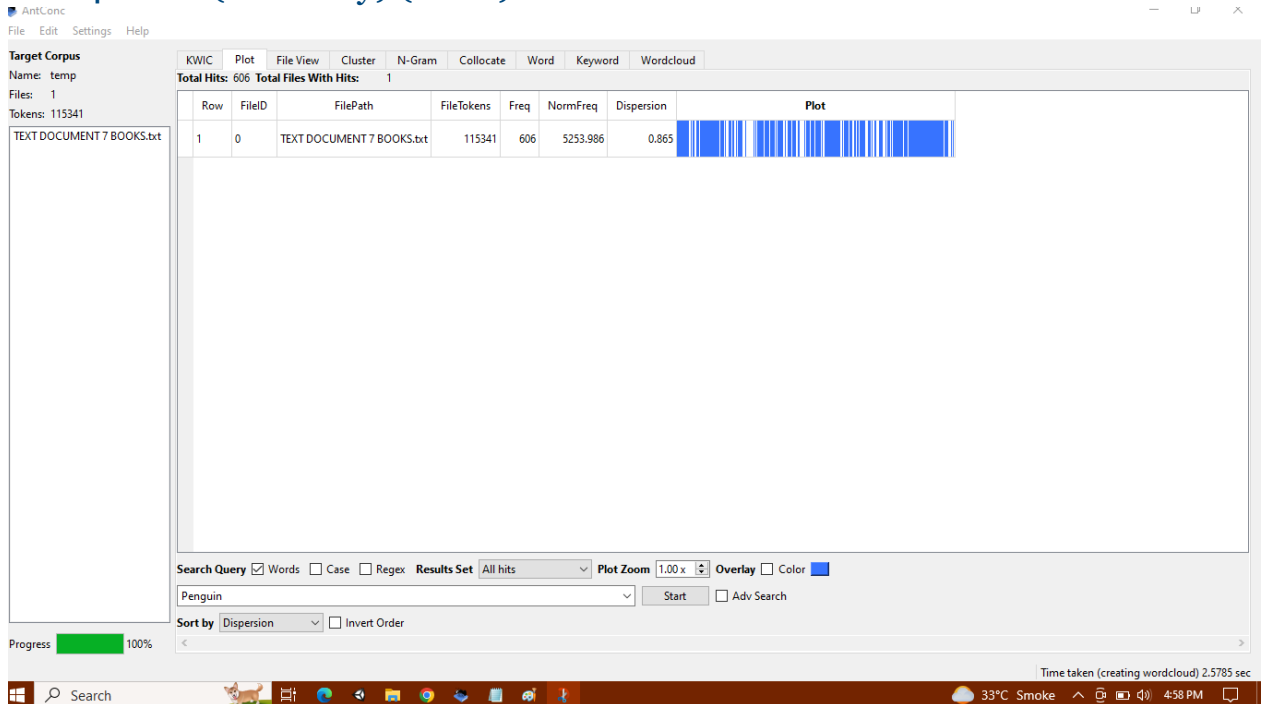
This table presents the frequency distribution of nouns, verbs, and adjectives in the written corpus. The dominance of nouns highlights lexical density and scientific orientation. Frequent biological process verbs (e.g., breeding, hatching) reflect ecological focus. The adjectives show technical and descriptive precision characteristic of informational writing.

**Figure 1**  
*Concordance Lines Of Written Data*



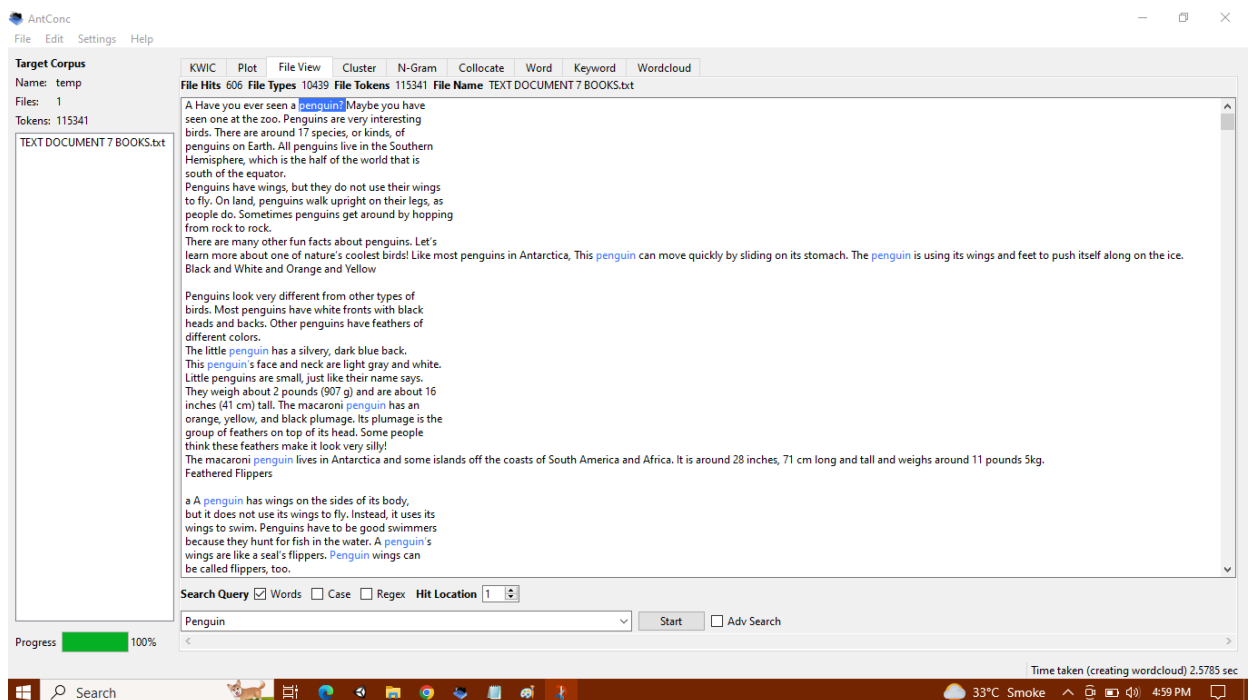
This figure displays concordance lines showing how key lexical items appear in context within the written corpus. It illustrates recurring patterns around ecological and scientific terminology. The figure supports the claim of informational and descriptive language use.

**Figure 2**  
*Written Data Plot*



This plot visually represents the distribution and frequency of lexical items in the written corpus. It highlights dominant word categories and their comparative frequencies. The visual pattern confirms the noun-heavy nature of written discourse.

**Figure 3**  
*Written Data File View*



This figure provides an overview of the compiled written corpus file. It demonstrates how the data was organized and processed for analysis. The structured format ensures methodological reliability.

**Figure 4**





**Table 4**

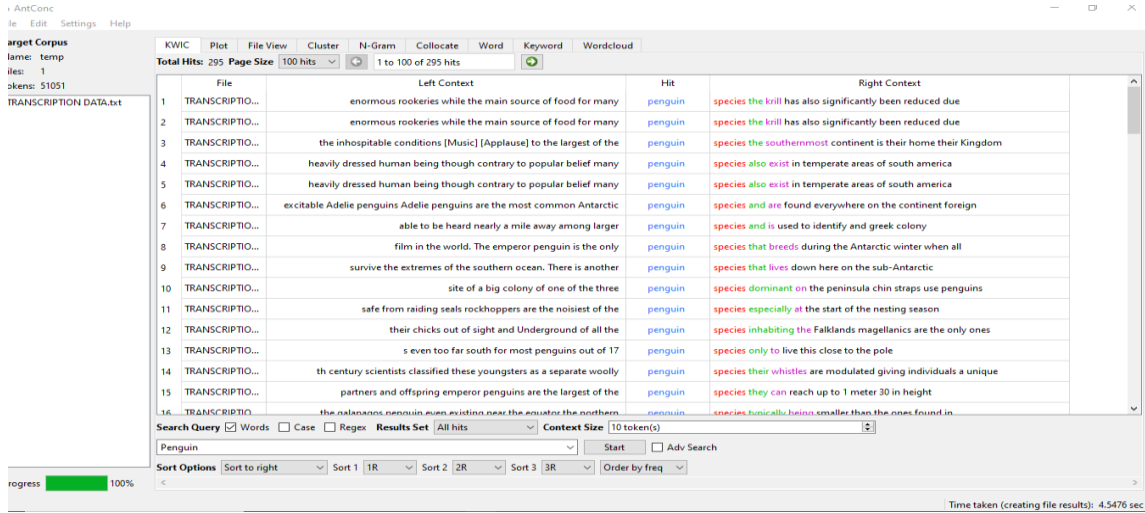
*Spoken Data Table With Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives And Their Frequencies*

	<b>Nouns</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Verbs</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1.	Music	498	Find	51	Young	93
2.	Sea	178	Hunt	16	Southern	32
3.	Penguins	494	Feed	33	Cold	61
4.	Ice	177	Hunting	36	Giant	39
5.	Chicks	146	Looking	24	Pretty	20
6.	Time	116	Diving	22	Hungry	18
7.	Water	115	Grow	15	Wild	17
8.	Food	92	Swim	14	Cool	13
9.	Birds	98	Freeze	9	Happy	7
10.	Year	92	Molting	9	Beautiful	6
11.	Species	79	Hatching	11	Wooden	4
12.	Antarctic	80	Eating	8		
13.	Fish	61	Climbing	4		
14.	Land	52	Chirping	4		
15.	Ocean	39	Slopping	3		
16.	Whales	23	Breed	27		
17.	Predators	26	Fight	20		
18.	Wildlife	18				
19.	Marine	10				
20.	Landscape	5				

This table outlines the most frequent nouns, verbs, and adjectives in the spoken corpus. Action-oriented verbs dominate, emphasizing movement and survival. The presence of emotive adjectives reflects narrative engagement. The table clearly illustrates stylistic differences between spoken and written modalities.

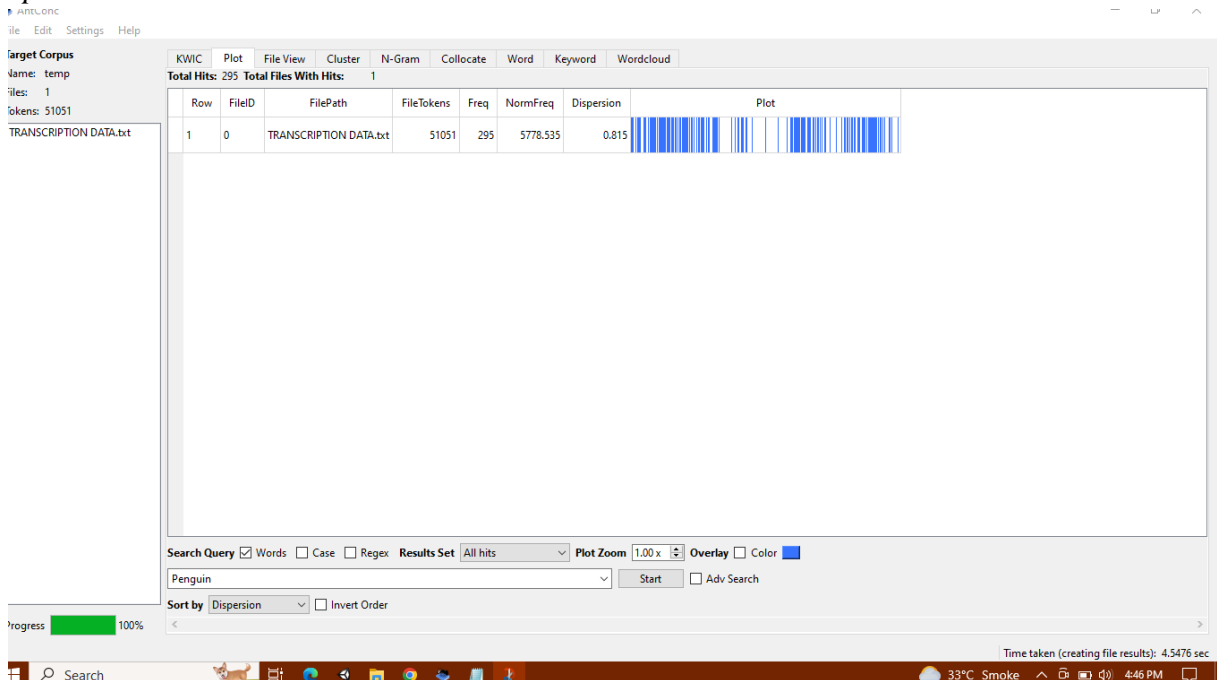


**Figure 6**  
*Concordance Lines Of Spoken Transcription*



This figure presents concordance lines from the spoken corpus, illustrating how penguins are discussed in narrative contexts. It highlights action verbs and descriptive phrases. The figure reflects storytelling and dramatic framing.

**Figure 7**  
*Spoken Data Plot*



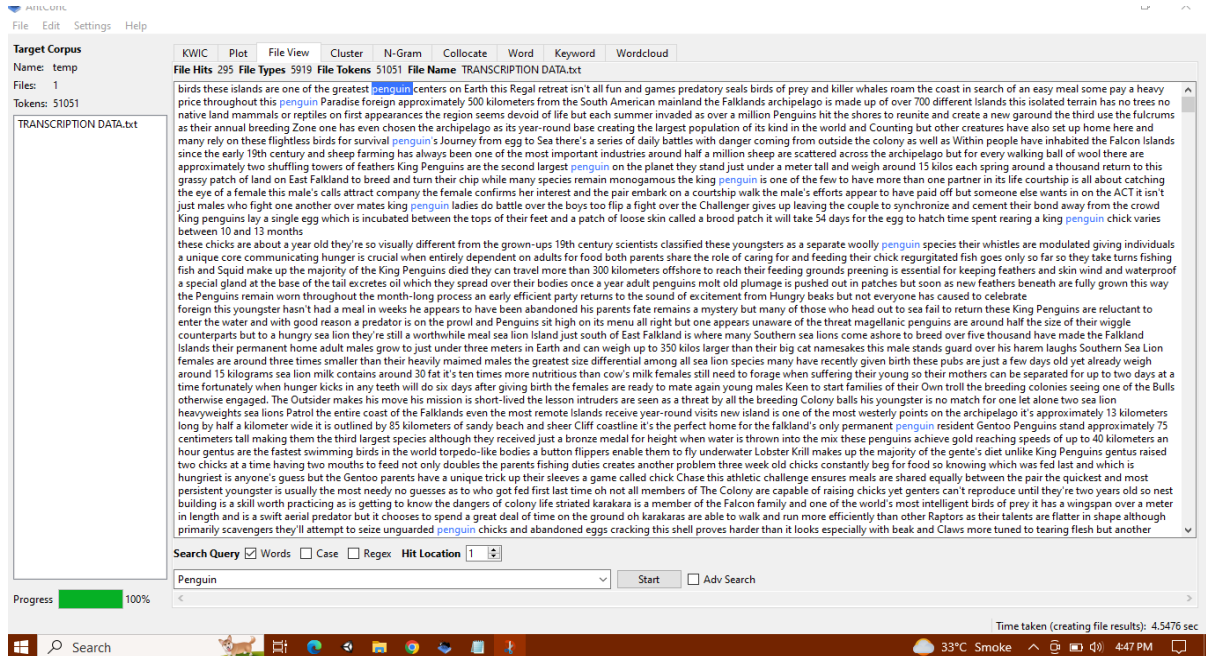
This plot displays the frequency distribution of spoken lexical items. It visually demonstrates the prominence of verbs and emotive adjectives. The figure confirms the dynamic nature of documentary discourse.



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### Figure 8

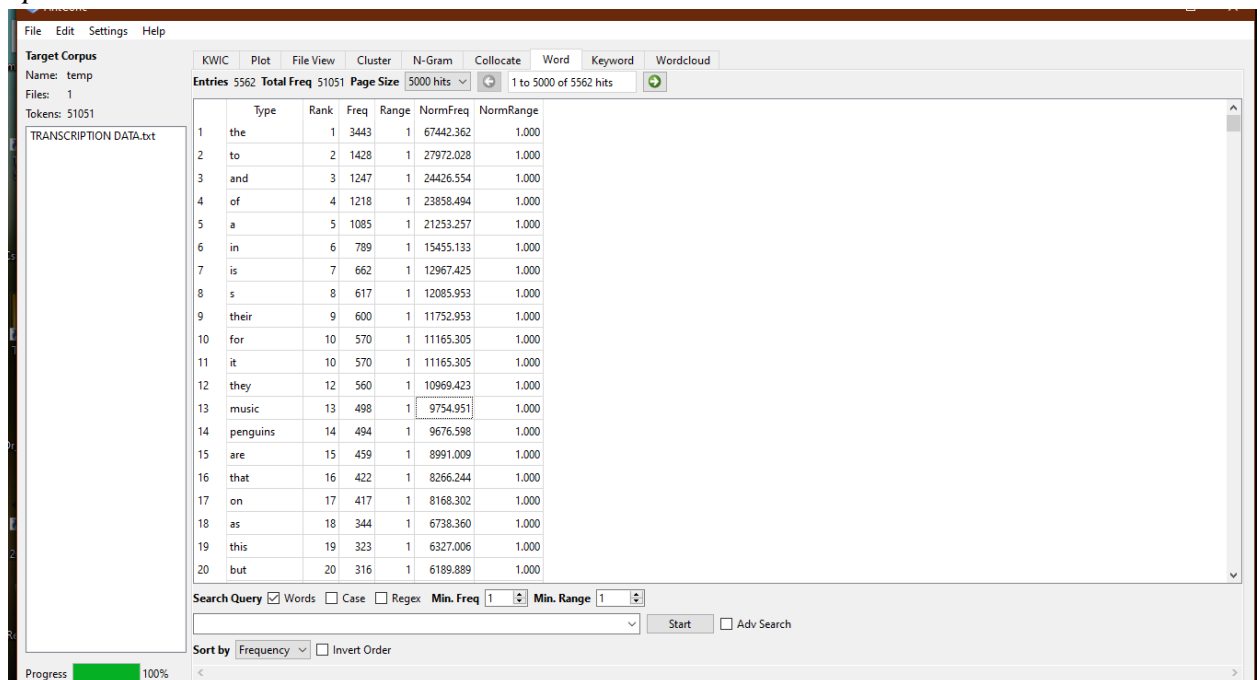
#### Spoken Data File View



This figure shows the compiled transcription file used for spoken corpus analysis. It illustrates the organization and processing of documentary transcripts. The structured data enhances research validity.

### Figure 9

#### Spoken Data Words



This figure lists the most frequent words in the spoken corpus. Words related to movement, survival, and environmental conditions dominate. It supports the interpretation of action-driven narrative construction.

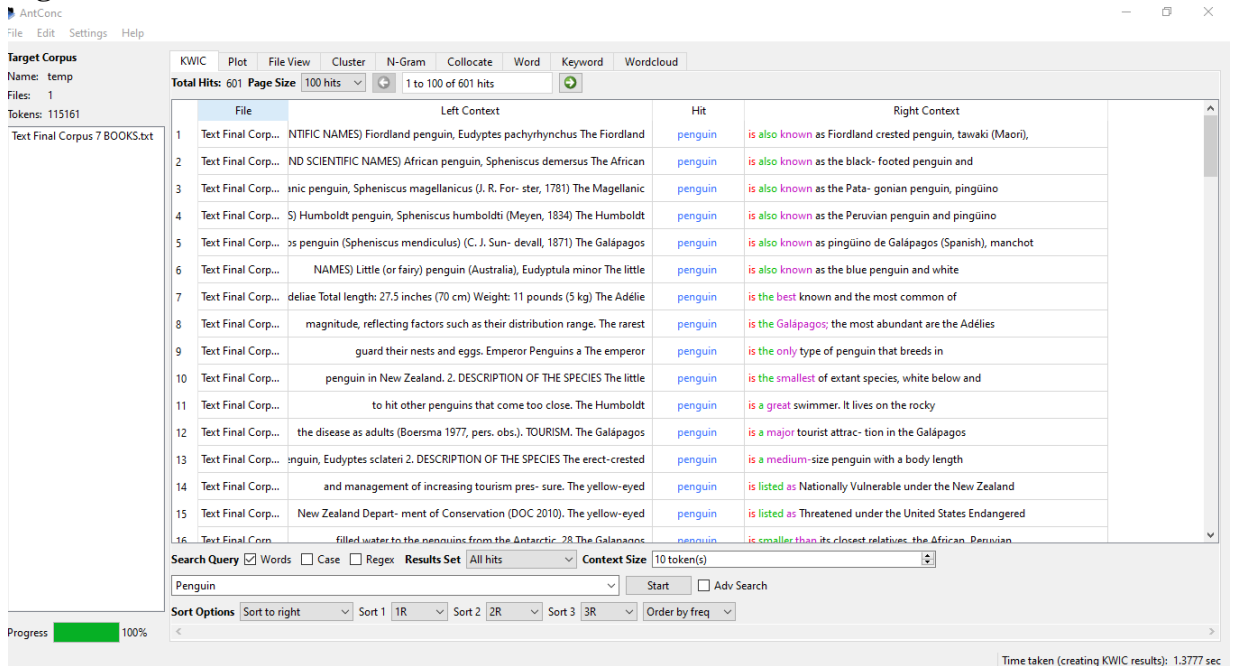




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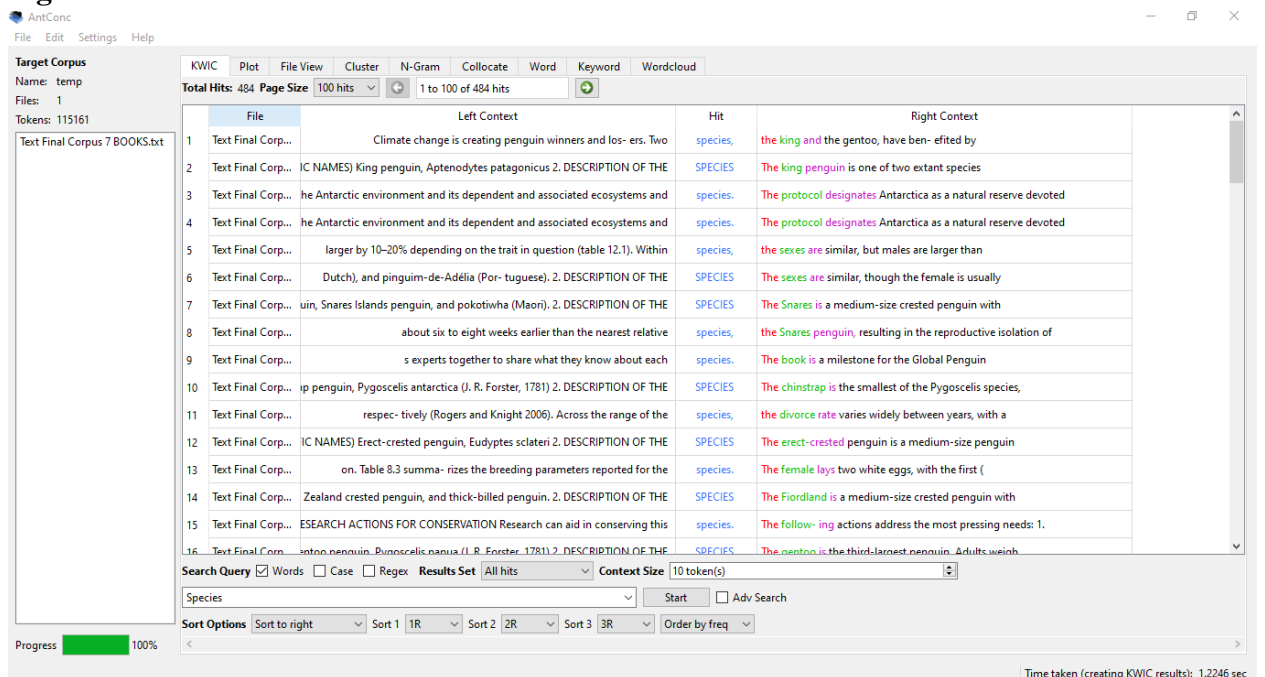
This figure displays concordance lines categorized by nouns, verbs, and adjectives in the written corpus. It illustrates how different grammatical categories function contextually. The figure strengthens the comparative linguistic analysis.

**Figure 12**



This figure likely presents comparative visualization between written and spoken lexical distributions. It highlights structural and stylistic differences between modalities. The figure supports register variation findings.

**Figure 13**





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This final figure appears to summarize comparative lexical patterns across corpora. It reinforces the contrast between informational (written) and narrative (spoken) discourse. The visualization consolidates the study's overall findings.

### Findings

The corpus analysis revealed significant differences between written and spoken discourse regarding lexical patterns and representation.

#### Written Corpus Findings

The written corpus demonstrated a high frequency of content nouns such as *penguin*, *island*, *species*, *population*, *colonies*, and *Antarctic*. These lexical choices reflect scientific classification, ecological focus, and conservation discourse. The dominance of nouns indicates high lexical density, characteristic of informational writing (Biber et al., 1999).

Among verbs, *breeding*, *hatching*, *laying*, and *monitoring* occurred frequently, suggesting a strong emphasis on biological processes and life cycles. Adjectives such as *southern*, *genetic*, *non-breeding*, and *stable* further highlight scientific and descriptive precision.

Overall, the written corpus constructs penguins primarily as ecological and biological entities within environmental systems.

#### Spoken Corpus Findings

The spoken corpus (documentary transcripts) showed frequent nouns such as *music*, *sea*, *penguins*, *ice*, and *chicks*. The unexpected prominence of *music* reflects background narration elements rather than ecological content.

Verbs like *hunt*, *feed*, *swim*, *fight*, and *grow* emphasize action and movement, contributing to dramatic storytelling. Adjectives such as *cold*, *giant*, *hungry*, *young*, and *wild* indicate emotional and visual framing designed to engage audiences.

Spoken discourse therefore portrays penguins dynamically, emphasizing survival, struggle, and environmental drama.

#### Comparative Insights

- Written discourse is noun-dominated and informational.
- Spoken discourse is verb-oriented and action-driven.
- Written texts focus on classification and ecology.
- Spoken texts highlight narrative engagement and emotional appeal.

These findings align with prior research on register variation between spoken and written language (Biber et al., 1999; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

#### Conclusion



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This study demonstrates how language shapes the representation of penguins differently across written and spoken modalities. Through corpus-based comparative analysis, the research reveals that written discourse prioritizes scientific categorization, ecological stability, and conservation themes, while spoken documentary discourse emphasizes movement, survival narratives, and emotional engagement. The findings contribute to corpus linguistics by illustrating register variation in wildlife discourse. Additionally, from an ecolinguistic perspective, the study highlights how linguistic choices construct particular understandings of marine life.

Penguins are not merely described; they are linguistically framed through patterns of nouns, verbs, and adjectives that shape human perception of nature.

### Recommendations

Future studies should expand the scope of research by incorporating larger and more diverse corpora, including additional media forms such as social media discourse on wildlife, to enhance the breadth and representativeness of findings. Researchers are also encouraged to integrate Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine underlying power relations, ideological positioning, and environmental narratives embedded within wildlife representation. The findings of this study can be applied pedagogically in ESL/EFL contexts, where corpus-based insights may help learners understand register variation and lexical patterns across spoken and written genres. Moreover, adopting an ecolinguistic perspective would enable scholars to further investigate how linguistic framing shapes environmental awareness and influences conservation attitudes. Finally, future research should adopt a multimodal approach by examining the interaction between visual elements, narration, and linguistic choices in documentaries to provide a more comprehensive understanding of wildlife discourse.

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