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ECO-COGNITIVE APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF EVALUATION CONCEPT

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Abstract

This article deals with the development of eco-cognitive approach to the investigation of evaluation concept in modern linguistics. Linguistic ecology relates to the field of complex and multifaceted phenomena of culturological and humanitarian character. It examines the peculiarities of language research approaches as an instrument of harmonious lifestyle of the people as well as an important means of social contact in the international research and creation of evaluative worldview.

Key words: eco-cognitive approach, evaluation concept, evaluation category, ecolinguistics, biocognitive theory, cognition.

1. Introduction

Languages cannot exist and survive in a vacuum. They are the consequence of continuous accommodation with the people who speak them and the surroundings in which they are used. An ecological approach to language displays that all cultures and related languages around the world are sustained and protect both by numerous levels of efficient relations that are evident among language communities of speakers and the variable quality of language itself (Wendel, 2005, p. 51). The ecological opinion has in recent years come a long way from its origins in biology, to become a new theory with many branches. Its advance is holistic and focuses on dynamic, interactive systems and the interrelationships between the object of investigation and its context (Lier, 2010; Wendel, 2005, p. 51-76). From an ecological point of view, language is inseparable from expressions of human sociality, such as communication, culture, and community. Arising from this perspective are main concepts such as patterning, predictability, and creativity, which are suggested as the source of a very different approach to linguistics. Linguists, along with everyone interested in the many aspects of meaningful person's behavior, will find the ideas presented in this paper both motivating and challenging. Any language is the product of steady adjustment to the individuals who speak it and the environment in which it circulates (Stibbe, 2006, p. 61-77). The ecological approach to language covers the multifaceted net of interactions which can be observed between reality, language and its users. The anthropocentric and eco-centric lines may be distinguished as reasonable forms in the development of contemporary humanitarian sciences as they establish different interpretations in the research of human development and human activities effects. All ecological phenomena perceived by an individual have a definite value in our minds, that is, they can be assessed (Killingsworth, 2005, p. 359-373). Evaluation is a fundamental constituent of cognition which is based on a value approach to the facts of nature and society. Person's life is impossible without estimation. The **aim** of this paper is to demonstrate the eco-cognitive grounds of evaluation category. Achieving this goal demands the resolution of the following **tasks**: the examination of the interconnection between ecolinguistics

and evaluation and the analysis of the structure of the evaluative concept. **Methods and techniques** are determined by the purposes, theoretical direction of the proposed article and are of complex nature. They integrate the fundamental statements of Evaluation theory and Cognitive theory. Theses and techniques of ecocognitive and biocognitive theories are used while studying the essential characteristics of the evaluative concept.

2. Ecology as an obligatory constituent of language

Present-day linguistics is characterized by synchronization of different scientific views considering its main objective – language. It is confirmed that language can be understood and elucidated only as a basic component of the cognitive system, regardless of the diverse interpretations of natural language principal directions. It means that all language structures and instruments are aimed at ensuring cognitive and mental individual's activity.

Knowledge is considered the key one category in cognitive science. It contains and incorporates information about the world and language system. This focus on linguistic investigation makes questions of clarifying linguistic semantics in terms of categorization and conceptualization of cognitive processes and procedures of outer world principally vital. In spite of the importance and social role significance of the notion of ecology, it is not quite an object of research in linguistic papers. This determines the **topicality** of author's piece of writing.

The foundation of the conceptual content of linguistic ecology as a scientific field represents the essential value orientations related to ethical principles, concepts of morality, and spirituality. The subjects of linguistic ecology are the culture of thinking and speech behavior, construction of linguistic taste, defence and perfection of literary language, identification of ways and methods of its enrichment, the clarity of speech habitat (Shevchenko, 2015, p. 114-132).

Ecolinguistics as a scientific branch that combines ecology and linguistics investigates the interconnection between language, human being as a language carrier, and the environment. Language as a dominant element in the chain between man, society and nature becomes the focus of cognitive and linguistic study. Many cognitivists try to explain this phenomenon and find the keys for the tasks' decision.

The essential rules of cognitive field of the first generation were questioned, chief principles of cognitive science of the second generation (as it is conventionally named by Lakoff and Johnson (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003) were worked out. Cognition is understood by scientists as the activity of the human body interacting with the environment for adaptation to the environment for further survival and reproduction.

It is very significant to note that this idea and other postulates originated by Lakoff and Johnson, were revealed in biocognitive theory developed by Chilean neurobiologists Maturana and Varela (Maturana and Varela, 1987). The scholars proposed a novel approach to living systems, based on the theory that living systems are studying systems, and life is a process of cognition. In other words, an endeavour was made to find an explanation for the phenomenon of knowledge as an effective tool which enables a living organism to continue its existence in a certain environment.

Moreover, the scientists highlight that the centre of any knowledge is an onlooker. The onlooker is defined as a living system with a circular organization. For such a system Maturana uses the term "autopoietic" (Maturana and Varela, 1987). All parts of the living system are imposed on this basic circularity and maintained it, ensuring its permanence in successive exchanges in the constantly changing environment. The living system exists as long as it retains the capability to self-reproduction and adaptation. As a result, reproduction and adaptation are the crucial conditions for a solitary organism's life and for the whole species.

Subjects surrounding the personality are an integral part of his niche, so relations with them serve the function of his adaptation within niches. These relations tend to have the nature of orientation. One organism can modify the behavior of another one, first, when they are linked with each other

in such a way that the previous behavior of one determines the succeeding behavior of another, such as courtship or a battle, the behaviour, which is the basis for friendship and hostility. Secondly, one organism can direct the behavior of another organism on part of his fieldwork, which is different from the part that incorporates this interaction. This takes place only if the interaction spheres of organisms are compatible. The second type of orienting interaction is the starting point for any language behavior.

The development of anthropocentrism in linguistics has contributed to the emergence of a new scientific direction – linguistic axiology, which studies the set of values of the ethnos and means of its representation in the language and cultural dimension. In the process of perception of the surrounding reality, an individual determines his approach to the world, assessing notions, facts, and events. Considering the above mentioned, one can refer to the study of the role of evaluative phenomena in a human's life.

2.1 Appraisal and Values

It is known that the fundamental nature of the category of evaluation is enlightened by the theory of value orientation of a person's activity and consciousness; and the variety of its characteristics embraces all that is given by the physical and mental nature of the person's being and feeling (Ananko, 2017; Arutyunova, 2012; Volf, 2009). Assessment is a type of cognitive activity, as in epistemological terms, any cognitive act expresses the attitude of the speaker to the object described, that is, contains an act of estimation (Freeman, 2017, p. 43-53). The evaluative moment is a person's mental procedure held on the subject of the utterance (perception, understanding, synthesis, conclusion, etc.), which is an evaluation in its broadest sense.

All environmental phenomena perceived by a person have a definite value in our minds, that is, they can be assessed. Evaluation is an essential constituent of cognition, which is based on a value approach to the phenomena and objects of nature and society. So, person's activity and life as a human being having diverse needs, interests and goals is impossible without appraisal.

People evaluate their history and present times, appearance, behavior and manners of the individual, the shape and size of different subjects, things, duration and frequency of events, the level of complexity of tasks, etc. Evaluative explanation of circumstances and other issues is one of the most important types of mental-speech activity in everyday life of a human being. As a result, the objective reality is examined by an individual from the angle of its evaluative character – good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, benefit and harm, beauty and ugliness.

The origin of the concept of "value", if we resort to reconstructing it on the ground of the etymology of the words it is named, fixes in it at least three vital components: the characterization of the external properties of objects and things as phenomena of evaluative attitude to them; psychological qualities of the individual as a subject of this attitude; relationships between people, their communication, due to which values obtain a generalized meaning. Each of the classes of values unites the basic meaning of value its material-objective, psychological and social importance. By recognizing the common properties of objects and reproducing their value, a person discloses certain characteristics of social relations because the significance of a thing or phenomenon is determined mainly by the social attitude towards them.

There are universal values (general to all mankind, specific to individual communities) and individual ones. Being a determined expression of the experience of the vital activity of a particular social community values form a certain structure, which a human being as a member of this society sticks to in the process of self-evaluation.

Personal values are an individual manifestation of a group or universal and general values. They are somewhat special in different people, due to the explanation of their content and the transfer of emphasis. The choice, appropriation and adaptation of social values by an individual are arbitrated by one's social identity and the values of the small contact groups.

The subject of evaluation acts in these cases as a mental or physical receptor, evaluating episode, situation and object in different ways: ethical appraisal (embarrassing, humiliating, sinful), emotional (boring), intellectual (foolish), utilitarian (meaningless, late) and psychological (difficult, easy, not easy, wise). It highlights the most important quality of the semantics of evaluative words, their disperse meaning, chiefly due to the ability to represent and signify the assessment in terms of different grounds.

2.2 Pragmatic and cognitive character of evaluation

Human beings' activity is a pragmatic notion. It is proper only when it is aimed at those phenomena and properties from which it is possible to get something useful, constructive and valuable. The quintessence of evaluation is always related to the nature of a person, because we appraise only "what is needed (physically and spiritually) to man and to Mankind" (Arutyunova, 2012, p. 181).

Evaluation can be termed as the speaker's objective or subjective attitude to a definite object, which is explicitly or implicitly conveyed and expressed by language means (Prihodko, 2016, p. 17). Assessment is always cognitive in its nature, and therefore logical-subject. Evaluative and epistemological purposes of the language are closely interrelated and interconnected. In addition, they are equal, as during estimation, cognition is transformed, and in the process of cognition, evaluation normally takes place.

The correlation between cognition and evaluation is very multifaceted. It belongs to the domain of cognitive linguistics, the problems of which cover the essence of the procedures that control and form and structure speech perception. As a result, the cognitive approach based on the interaction of language and thinking is the most applicable for the study of the category of evaluation, because it investigates it in the context of human cognitive activity.

Appraisal is a process that is typical of any science. This is proved by the fact that value course in many cases donates to the progress of a whole range of directions not only in the linguistic sphere, but also in computer technology, genetic engineering, and many other fields. It shows constant incorporation of scientific knowledge within the cognitive paradigm that was formed as interdisciplinary (cognitive) science.

The cognitive process of evaluation, counting in the general program of human activity, is decision-making-oriented, and is the source of the selection of practical actions. An individual as a subject of linguistic activity is a person who perceives and understands the world and is competent of estimating speech facts in day-to-day speech practice. The aesthetic experience of the personality is mainly recorded in the evaluative definitions of words (White, 2015).

The communicative objective put forward by the speaker is to convey to the listener his point of view, to persuade him of the possibility and legitimacy of the idea in the best possible way (Prihodko, 2019, p. 114-120; White, 2016, p. 79-82). The image of the word, which is stored in the linguistic consciousness of the individual, is exposed in emotional and aesthetic assessments. This method is based on relations, caused by the fact reflected in the word, or by its sound shape.

Furthermore, Vinogradov's understanding of the word as something shining with the expressive colors of the social surroundings have not lost its significance:

By displaying the personality (individual or collective) of the subject of speech, characterizing his evaluation of reality, a word qualifies him as a representative of a particular social group. Expression is always a subjective, typical and individual from the fastest to the most stable, from the excitement of the moment to the continuity not only of the person and her neighboring environment, class, but also of the epoch, nation, culture (Vinogradov, 2001, p. 25).

Evaluation is anthropocentric by its nature. While estimating an object or thing, an individual should "pass" its signs through one's consciousness. The substance of the appraisal reflects the character of the person. Evaluation represents a person as an aim, showing the progress from the field of systems to the center of all these systems, to a person, as a language personality.

The close link between the speaker's evaluation and knowledge of the world is validated by the fact that in the statement an appraisal can find its expression in the characterization and description of certain events, objects, phenomena that have a positive / negative evaluative importance for a particular social group or society as a whole.

The linguistic characteristics of the category of evaluation comprises the whole set of means and methods of its expression. They are phonetic, morphological, syntactic, mental, etc., which reflect the elements of the evaluative situation.

The stratification of evaluation vocabulary confirms Potebnya's statement about the parts of speech as a kind of "modus" (Potebnya, 1968, p. 5), the illustration of something in our consciousness, as well as the ideas of some researchers on the necessity for a functional-cognitive approach to the study of the category of evaluation (Byessonova, 2012; Myroniuk, 2017; Nikitin, 2007; Volf, 2009). The interest of scholars in the "grammar of evaluation" is stimulated by the characteristic for modern linguistics mood of attention to functional grammar, which reliably occupies its slot despite less than centuries-old history.

Functional orientation of estimating utterances is caused by the fact that the speaker makes the use of language means as a device for his own interference into a speech act, as an expression of thoughts, opinions, judgments, position and estimation, the expression of relations one sets up between oneself and the listener. It is the evaluative-communicative function of the language, which is opposed to the representative (or conceptual) one. The speaker in this way expresses either the manifestation of the will or decision of the values of the phenomenon.

The functional principle allows to consider evaluative utterances in their "actions", reflecting positive or negative values, attributed to the subject or the object of evaluation. Based on the tasks of functional grammar – the development of the dynamic aspect of functioning of grammatical units in interaction with components of different levels of language, which participate in expressing the meaning of the utterance, linguists try to explore comprehensively the semantics of evaluation and means of its expression in modern linguistic studies.

The explanation and interpretation of the evaluation as a "super-subjective" category of intellection and language reveals the difficult and incongruous nature of the evaluative semantics, which consists in generalizing reference of the evaluative task, "secondness" of its nomination, the selection of the communicative goal, which reflects the objective properties of information simultaneously.

We can understand the evaluation as an expression of the evaluative attitude of the speaker to the subject of speech, achievable at all levels of the language, which is the result of abstract work of the speaker's consciousness and logical reasoning. The notion of "evaluation" has become an essential part of the conceptual system of contemporary linguistics, which visibly displays the fact that it is impossible to study a language without resorting to its most important aim, its "creator", carrier, user, specific linguistic personality, a person.

The evaluation, for that reason, should be studied comprehensively and profoundly as a category of high level abstraction as one of the categories given by the social, physical and mental nature of a person, which determines his relation to other individuals and objects of the surrounding reality.

3. Results and Discussion

The states of activity of the nervous system, resulting from the contact with an object is qualified as basic representation (Kravchenko, 2001). Demonstrations of all possible connections with a particular object or with analogous objects as well as interactions with different objects (but at the same time and in similar situations) are combined into the complex of representations.

This multifaceted complex is regarded as a structural unit of the experience / memory, or concept. In other words, ecological concept is a set of illustrations of interactions with the object or objects (non-linguistic and linguistic), characterized by the causal dependency and supports successful adaptation of the organism to its environment.

Based on this, the evaluation concept is a cognitive category. In its structure the following components can be differentiated: a graded axiological scale of values, which correlates with events and facts of real world that are conceptualized, the linguistic means of expressing the results of this relation, two poles of appraisal – positive and negative and the so-called equator of neutrality. The evaluation concept acts as a filter of fixation of reality, that is, as an instrument of correlation of facts and events of reality with the graded axiological scale of the individual, resulting in evaluative judgment.

The structure of the evaluation concept of a language can be represented as a nucleus, which is the custodian of the collective knowledge of a particular people, and a periphery that is filled by the subjective representations of the native speaker of the language. The substance of the evaluative content is determined by the implementation of the central or peripheral characteristics. In the first case, collective knowledge is at the heart of a certain evaluative nomination. The correlation of the object with the periphery is based on subjective, individual knowledge.

The semantic field of the evaluation concept includes the number of components. The comparative analysis of the means of evaluation concept verbalization in different languages solves the following very important task: to identify the constituents which belong to the core of the concept. Therefore, they are central which contain collective representations of the speakers of the same language, and peripheral which are subjective ones.

Features of the core constituents do not require explication and are understood by each native possessor of specific linguoculture. Peripheral characteristics are often conditioned by personal experience, individual perceptions of the speaker, and the pragmatic aspect of studying the values, as well as linguistic means of their explication.

During all his life a person cognizes surrounding reality, gains and increases new knowledge about the world, organizes and categorizes this information in a certain way and correlates it with the already known facts. Thus, the processes of conceptualization and categorization are of particular significance for systematization and updating the obtained knowledge, for its successful application and use in different situations.

Specific character of conceptualization is comprehending the information received for the construction of mental objects and phenomena that creates the certain beliefs about the world (concepts). The categorization is a psychical act, that organizes, systematizes and sorts depictions of interactions in the person's mind, which diminishes the infinite diversity of the individual to visible number of units. Together they symbolize a complex mental process, aiming at the successful incorporation of a human being into the surrounding environment.

Conceptualization from the evaluative point of view is the appraisal of comprehension of objects of the world around us and the formation as a result of these assessment concepts in our mind. Evaluative categorization is a grouping of objects and phenomena by the nature of their assessment according to the evaluative classes and categories, as well as the mental correlation of an object with a certain evaluative category.

The purpose of the evaluative concepts is to provide a vision for the categories and to serve as a cognitive basis for their formation is largely determined by the system of quantitative and individual values of a person. The specificity of evaluative categorization and its main difference from natural categorization is that these two processes are based on different ways of perceiving the world, natural and evaluative pictures of the world.

Each individual has a unique experience of adaptation to the environment; consequently, the set of representations and concepts of causal relations is also to some extent unique. In this connection, it is possible to speak about the individual level in the structure of the concept. However, a person lives in a certain society, which is a part of his/her niche.

The existence of an individual directly depends on the contacts with other individuals, as they orientate him on his effective behavior in a definite situation. In this regard, it is possible to speak

about social and national levels of concept. Regardless of the great variety of niches, some objects are common to all, such as macro-niche "Earth". Concepts-universals are the result of interactions with such objects.

Cognitive prototypes that exist in the person's mind, are different according the channels of incoming information, or, in terms of the biological approach, they are formed because of diverse kinds of interactions with constituents of the niche. Thus, we can differentiate the concepts of sensory perception of the world and concepts of mediate knowledge.

The major characteristic of the human's mind is a facility to react not only to direct motivation, but also to the sound stimulus – a word. Due to the language, a person perceives and feels the outer reality in a different way than an animal – one studies it during the process of communication. From the point of view of the biological conception of language, its chief function is to enlarge the cognitive field or the area of individual's interrelations.

Speaking about ecocognitive approach to the analysis of the evaluation concept it is necessary to refer to the notion of meaning. Meaning is the causal connections linking the representations of interaction with the linguistic and non-linguistic objects in the mind of the person. Linguistic behavior of people forms a component of the environment, being the existential sphere. Relation of mutual causality between the human being and the environment requires causal relations between the state of his nervous system (consciousness) and language as a social adaptive behavior. Consequently, the analysis of the meaning of language units helps to classify relatively authentic structure of the concept. According to the unified ecocognitive hypothesis of meaning, an inherent feature of living systems is the gift to generate meaning. Meaning is the link between the organism and environment, defined by the value that some pieces of the environment have for this very organism. Such meaning can be considered as an ecological one, in the sense that it is not totally subjective or objective but is determined by the interaction between the organism and the surroundings.

From the position of ecocognitive approach, conceptual worldview can be defined as the complex of concepts or multifarious representations present in the mind of the individual reflecting the collective experience of the direct and indirect (in the process of upbringing and education) relations with the environment. This conceptual system itself is the object of interaction.

Linguistic ecology dynamically reveals natural alternations of linguistic conceptualization of the world, the interactions between social, cultural and linguistic processes. In this regard, it should be noted that this area has brightly marked interdisciplinary character, integrating varied knowledge of humanitarian nature (Wijayanto, 2005, p. 82-92).

A significant amount of interdisciplinary phenomena and their respective terms function in linguistic ecology. They are in a state of constant contact and intersect with different linguistic fields of terms. Hence, linguistic ecology relates to the branch of compound and multifaceted notions of culturological and humanitarian character.

4. Conclusions

The category of evaluation is an important component of the conceptual worldview, as far as the notions of positive and negative, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, intelligence and dullness, hard work and laziness, moral and immoral are inherent in any culture, any social system. At the same time, in the mind of the native speaker of each language, the image of the world is created by a set of linguistic universals and special functioning of linguistic signs that reflect the national viewpoint.

Language worldview is a symbolic way of understanding objects of reality in which the important fragments of the world are fixed. In this case, the objective world itself, and judgments about it, its evaluative characteristics and subjective attitude to it by members of this society are represented in the interaction of the means of language expression.

We regard the evaluation concept as an independent mental formation that is culturally specified. Being verbalized, this concept is considered a part of the conceptual and language worldview

of a certain linguocultural community, and can be defined as their structural component. The reason for this is that the evaluation participates in shaping the value worldview being a factor inherent in any culture.

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Résumé

This paper discusses the eco-cognitive foundations of evaluation concept. It examines the peculiarities of language research approaches as an instrument of harmonious lifestyle of the people as well as an important means of creation of evaluative worldview. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the eco-cognitive grounds of evaluation category. The paper grounds on theses and techniques of evaluation, cognitive, eco-cognitive and biocognitive theories.

Ecolinguistics as a research field that combines ecology and linguistics studies the interaction between language, human being as a language personality and his environment. The anthropocentric and eco-centric lines may be distinguished as reasonable forms in the development of contemporary humanitarian sciences for the reason that they establish different interpretations in investigating development and outcomes of human activity. Axiological aspect of natural environment preservation has contradicted the anthropocentric outlook, as a result the principles of ecological ethics are thought to be much more important for the issue of human survival than anthropocentric ideals of value.

Evaluation is a fundamental constituent of cognition, which is based on a value approach to the phenomena of nature and society. So, person's activity and life as of a human being having different requirements, interests and objectives is impossible without estimation. The paper looks at the evaluation concept as the formation which consists of a nucleus, which is the custodian of the collective knowledge of a particular people, and a periphery that is filled by the subjective representations of the native speaker of that language. The evaluation concept is an independent mental formation that is culturally specified. It is considered to be a part of the conceptual and language worldview of a certain linguocultural community, and can be defined as their structural component.

Key words: eco-cognitive approach, evaluation concept, evaluation category, ecolinguistics, biocognitive theory, cognition.

Анотація

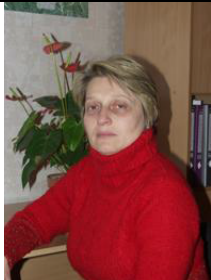
Статтю присвячено розгляду екокогнітивних основ концепту оцінки. У ній проаналізовано особливості мовних дослідницьких підходів як інструмента гармонійного способу життя людей, а також як важливого засобу створення оцінної картини світу.

Метою цієї роботи є екокогнітивні підстави категорії оцінки. Дослідження ґрунтується на засадах і методах теорії оцінки, когнітивної, екокогнітивної та біокогнітивної теорій. Еколінгвістика – дослідницька галузь, що поєднує екологію та лінгвістику, вивчає взаємодію мови, людини як мовної особистості та її оточення. Антропоцентричні й екоцентричні аспекти можуть бути виокремлені як раціональні форми розвитку сучасних гуманітарних наук, оскільки вони встановлюють різні інтерпретації при вивченні розвитку та результатів людської діяльності. Аксиологічний аспект збереження природного довкілля суперечив антропоцентричному світогляду, унаслідок чого принципи екологічної етики вважаються набагато важливішими для проблеми виживання людини, аніж ціннісні антропоцентричні ідеали.

Оцінка – це фундаментальний складник пізнання, що ґрунтується на ціннісному підході до фактів природи та суспільства. Отже, діяльність і життя людини, яка має різні потреби, інтереси та цілі, неможливі без оцінки. Специфіка оцінної категоризації та її основна відмінність від природної категоризації полягає в тому, що ці два процеси ґрунтуються на різних способах

сприйняття світу, природних та оцінних картинах світу. У роботі концепт оцінки розглядається як формування, що складається з ядра, яке зберігає колективні знання конкретного народу, та периферії, що заповнюється суб'єктивними уявленнями носія мови. Категорія оцінки є важливим елементом концептуальної картини світу, оскільки поняття позитивного і негативного, добра та зла, краси і потворності, розуму та дурості, працьовитості і ліні, морального й аморального притаманні будь-якій культурі, будь-якій соціальній системі. Концепт оцінки – це самостійне ментальне утворення, що вирізняється культурною специфікою. Він вважається частиною концептуальної та мовної картини світу певної лінгвокультурної спільноти і може бути визначений як їх структурний компонент.

Ключові слова: екогнітивний підхід, концепт оцінки, категорія оцінки, еколінгвістика, біокогнітивна теорія, пізнання.

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