

Semiotic Signs In Walt Disney's Selected Movie Posters In 2018

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article History: Submitted Nov 11, 2019 Revised Nov 27, 2019 Accepted Des 5, 2019 Published Des 13, 2019	<i>This research analyzes the semiotic sign in selected posters of walt Disney in 2018, and the selected posters are Avengers Infinity War, Christopher Robin, Marry Poppins Returns, the Black Panther, The Incredibles 2, The Nut Cracker And The Four Realms. The semiotic sign is a sign that analyzes by semiotic theories. The purpose of the research are to know the classification of sign with Charles sanders pierce semiotic theory, the meaning of sign by roland barthes, then the correlation between visual and verbal sign with Gillian dyer theory. This research uses the qualitative descriptive method as reflected by this thesis which explained descriptively. The writer also uses the comparative method in order to compare the diversities in the posters in conclusion. The classification of signs are including Representment: qualisign, sinsign, and legisign. Object: icon, index, and symbol. Interpretant: dyme, dicent, and argument. The meanings are including denotative, connotative and myth. The writer also found the correlation between visual and verbal sign in those six posters.</i>
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Introduction

Language is a sign, a code or a communication system which agreed by a certain community. This certain community, individually or collectively, uses a language as a mediato deliver a message, aim, or meaning of things. Language, which is a sign or symbol, makes human identifying themselves or the others to understand every aspect in life easily¹. Language is an instrument for conveying meaning. The structure of this instrument reflects its function, and it can only be properly understood in terms of its function. To study language without reference to meaning is like studying road signs from the point of view of their physical properties (how

¹Hawan, M Rizki. (2018). *an Analysis of Semiotic Signs Found in Movie Poster of Pirates of the Caribbean*. Thesis of Department Of English Faculty Of Cultural Studies University Of Sumatera Utara Medan, p. 6

much they weigh, what kind of paint are they painted with, and so on), or like studying the structure of the eye without any reference to seeing.²

Simply, language is a tool of communication. Communication is a process of exchanging information between two or more people. The one who share the information as a referent and the one who receiving the information called receiver. Information can include fact, opinion, attitudes, idea, believes even emotions. The interaction of people signed by communication.

The act of exchanging information ceases to be a passive transfer of a message that is adequate unto itself from one bloc of memory to another and becomes a translation, in the course of which the message is transformed and the striving for adequacy enters into dramatic conflict with the impossibility of its complete realization. The act of communication begins to include the aspect of tension within itself. Communication between two or more individuals may be defined as language so art is a kind of language that can be in turn divided into such sublanguages as literature, cinema, fine arts, and so on. It means that communication is exchange of facts, ideas, opinion or emotion by two or more people. Communication is the transmission and interchange of facts, ideas, feelings or course of action.

Language and communication are inseparable because communication needs language which is content signs and symbols and each signs and symbols has a meaning. And with the meaning people can understand the language. Signs take the form of words, images, sounds, colours, flavours, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when People invest them with meaning. People are able to communicate with one another exactly because people use "approximately the same signs"³

There are some kinds of literary works, they are films, drama, novel, short stories, and autobiography. From those kinds of literary works above, the writer interests to discuss about film, especially the posters of film. Film is Film is a unique art production and has a strong influence toward its viewer because it combines paint, technology, music, literature and drama, and becomes interesting to be watched. Entertainment industry is a sub-unit group of industries devoted to entertainment. This industry used to describe the mass media companies that control the distrubution and manufacture of mass media entertainment. Entertainment is an activity that hold attention and interest of audience or specifically the activities or events that give pleasure and delight to audience.

The writer interests to choose the poster of film in this analyzing, because the poster is an important tool in marketing of a product. Because poster content verbal and visual signs which designed vertically with an image that can persuade the people to watch the film and display in public place and can be seen in the lobby of cinema. A poster became an important as a tool to grab the public's attention and curiosity about the film. In this thesis the writer going to analyze the posters of film from Walt Disney.

From the explanations above it just the real description of the poster, the writer only explains and describe a poster without the meaning behind the signs and things. This study analyzes the semiotic signs used in film using semiotic theories. In this study the writer uses the way of interpreting movie poster based on Peirce's theory of signs (text, object and context) to get the clear meaning from signs on the posters.

² Wierzbicka, A. (1996). *Semantics primes and universals*. New York: Oxford university press.p. 3

³Semenenko, Aleksei.(2012). *The texture of culture an Introduction to Yuri Lotman's Semiotic Theory* (Semiotics and Popular Culture). New York: Palgrave Macmillan p. 26

The writer uses triadic semiosis from Peirce's Theory of Semiosis, semiotic theory of Roland Barthes about meaning, Concept of colour terms by Wierzbicka is used to support Peirce's theory in interpreting the colors meaning in the poster and Dyer theory to answer the correlation between the visual and verbal signs.

Review of Literature

a. Semiotic

Semiotic comes from Greece *semeion* which means sign, according to Piliang cited by the exploration of semiotic Tinarbuko as a method to open various branches of science is possible because there is a tendency to various social discourses, language is also used as a model of social discourse⁴. Semiotics is a study of sign or sign specifically learned in semiotics. Signs here are all of the element of human being that content a meaning and agreed by people to make another people understood to the sign and then became a tool of communication. As known human being is surrounded by the signs, sign is something which stand to somebody for something in some respect or capacity (Pierce)⁵.

There are three most known experts of semiotics, they are Ferdinand de Saussure, William Charles pierce and Roland Barthes. The term from Saussure semiotics is about sign, signifier and signified. That is the basic to develop of sign theory. Ferdinand de Saussure has a linguistics science background, and according to him, as long as that the action and behavior of human being bring the meaning, there should be a distinction and conventions behind a system that allow the meaning of it. There is a sing there is a system. Semiotics by Ferdinand the Saussure in *The Course in General Linguistics*, as science that learned about sign as part of life. There two concept of semiotics according to Saussure, "signifier" or a concept and "signified" or mental concept. These two concept are inseparable like the two sides of paper.

The term of Roland Barthes about semiotics in his theory is a form as a signifier, concept as a signified and signification as sign. With his theory the writer can find not only denotative meaning but also connotative meaning. Meanwhile the term of Charles sanders pierce semiotics as a master of philosophy is human only can think through the sign in his thought logic is same with semiotics and semiotics can be applied to all types of sign. According to pierce semiotics can be explained through sign, object and interpretant. He wrote that sign is something that stands for something which reflects a certain capacity or interest. People are not able to avoid from interpreting things and people doing so, people treat them as a "sign". Sign can be a word, sound, color, images, action, event, flavors object and so on. They have no intrinsic meaning until we interpret them as a meaning of something.⁶

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), whose sure name is pronounced "purse", was a son of Benjamin Peirce, a Harvard professor of mathematics and astronomy and, at the time, America's foremost mathematician. These signs may include sounds, words, and everything that could give a guidance as a process of communication, like a house, shirt, and every symbol with meaning.

Study of signs become a serious field in linguistics and literature. Unlike the dyadic model offered by Ferdinand de Saussure, which consists of the signifier and signified, Charles Sanders Peirce offers a triadic model and to explain about Peirce's semiotics theory. Anything is a sign

⁴Sumbo Tinarbuko. (2008) *Semiotika Komunikasi Visual*, Yogyakarta: Penerbit Jakarta, p.11.

⁵Winfried Noth. (1995) *Handbook of Semiotics*. United State of America: Indiana University Press. p.42.

⁶Chandler, D. (2017). *Semiotics The Basics*. New York: Routledge, Inc.p.11

when someone interprets it as a “signifying” something. That is the most important thing or as main concern of semiotics.⁷

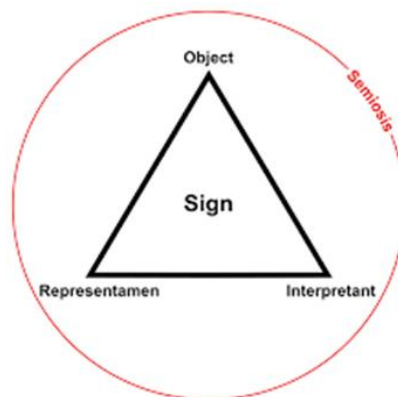


Figure 2.1 Charles Sanders Peirce's Triadic Model of Semiotic

Relationship between the three elements of the sign or representment is the First element which stands in such a genuine triadic relation to the Second element, called its Object, as to be capable of determining the Third element, called its Interpreting, to assume the same triadic relation to its Object in which it stands itself to the same Object. Based on its representamen, Peirce divides signs into three, called qualisign, sinsign, and legisign.

1. Qualisign which is formed by quality, such as the concept of color.
2. Sinsign which is formed by the real physical reality or the shape of a thing. Peirce says about Sinsign (sin is “being only once” as in single, simple) is actual thing or event.
3. Legisign is the law or rule of how the thing should be such as the sound of whistle in the soccer match.⁸

Based on its object, a sign may be termed an icon, an index, or a symbol.

1. An icon is a sign which refers to the object that it denotes merely by virtue of characters of its own, and which it possesses, just the same, whether any such Object actually exists or not. For example, a picture of president Soekarno means the picture is an icon of president Soekarno.
2. An index is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of being really affected by that Object. For example, smoke is an index of fire.
3. A symbol is a sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object. Such as traffic lights and national flags.

Based on its interpreting, signs consist of a rhyme, a dicent, and an argument.

1. A rhyme is a sign which is understood to represent its object in its characters merely such as a red-eye indicates that the person is crying or drunk or sleepy.
2. A dicent is a sign to describe the fact of interpretant. For example, the dangerous road in a city has a sign that the road is dangerous because there are so many accidents on that road.

⁷Chandler, D. *Semiotics The Basics*. Inc. p.11

⁸Peirce, Charles Sanders. (1940). *Philosophical Writings of Peirce*; Edited by Justus Buchler. New York: Dover Publications. p: 101

3. An argument is a logical reasoning of interpretant or sign of law. One example is that if a person is standing in a room without lighting, he will say this room is dark because of its lack of light.

b. Meaning

Barthes (1915-1980) was the first to apply ideas of semiotics, as it developed from linguistics, to visual images, for example, food advertisements, photography and motion pictures. In semiotic analysis, signification is the output of signs. Signification is as it were the content or import of communication. Roland Barthes argued that there were in fact three levels of signification:

1. The denotative (this is a tree)
2. The connotative (tree connotes nature)
3. The mythical (nature is bountiful).

To summarise, an image of a tree can signify 'bountiful nature'. Barthes used the example of photography to demonstrate denotation. The photograph denotes what was in front of the camera when the image was captured. But how the image is photographed, and what abstract values may be associated with the resultant picture, are a matter of connotation.⁹

Barthes called the immediate visual impact denoted meaning (or first order or basic meaning) and the cultural meaning we attach to it connoted meaning (or second-order meaning). In other words, denoted meaning refers to the recognition of what is registered by the image or photograph (a photograph of a monk) and connoted meaning refers to the possible invitation of the image to interpret, give meaning to, the forms even against or beyond the authors' intention. This provides a useful backdrop to look at the application of semiotics to visual and material culture and, furthermore, in terms of considering cultural meanings, we may also usefully note Barthes' influence on poststructuralist thinking. Post-structuralism does not view language as a structure but rather a *structuring process* in terms of the relationship of the reader, or viewer, or consumer. In this respect, there is a greater emphasis on the *impact* of language and the role the individual plays in creating meaning.

Denotative Meaning

Barthes refers denotation as a common-sense, the obvious meaning of the sign. For example, a photograph of a street scene denotes that particular street; the word "street" denotes an urban road lined with buildings. This photograph can be taken in two different ways of photography. Those two photographs will have the same denotative meaning. In other words, whatever the ways the photograph of a street was taken, that photographs of the street will always denote that particular street. It means, their denotative meaning would be the same.¹⁰

Denotation refers to those things which appear to us as natural and which people can take for granted. In other words, denotation can be called as a conceptual meaning. meaning that according to observations by sight, smell, hearing, feeling and everything that has to do with factual information and should be objective. The true meaning or significance that is straightforward. The actual meaning in the dictionary is not a figurative meaning.

Connotative Meaning

⁹Hartley, John. (2002). *Communication, cultural and media studies: the key concept*, third edition. London: routledge. p. 210

¹⁰Fiske, John. (2002). *Introduction to Communication Studies* (second ed). New York: routledge. p.86

Barthes refers connotation to describe one of the three ways in which signs work in the second order of signification. It describes the interaction between the sign and the feelings or emotion of the users and the values of their culture. Based on the example in denotation above, those two photographs are both of the same streets. The difference between those photos lies in the form, the appearance of the photograph, that is, in the signifier. By looking from those two photographs, the difference between connotation and denotation is clear. Denotation is the mechanical reproduction on film of the object at which the camera is pointed, while connotation is the human part of the process. In other words denotation is what is photographed; connotation is how it is photographed.¹¹

Myth

A myth is a a culture's way of thinking about something. Myth is close to the culture that contains believes and religion. the traditional myth of the British policeman includes concepts of friendliness, reassurance, solidity, non-aggressiveness, lack of firearms. If connotation is the second-order meaning of the signifier, myth is the second-order meaning of the signified.¹² Myth is understood as a means of disguising or masking ambiguities within a culture, and to a certain extent its role can be understood as ideological. Its theoretical application is usually anthropological, psychoanalytical and/or semiotic.¹³

Design of Research

In this research used descriptive qualitative method that is suitable with the aim of this research. Qualitative research may be in descriptive form. The data collects in the form of words as a descriptive explanation than a number.

The data source of this research is the posters especially the posters of film from *Walt Disney* company. The writer get the data by taking several posters of film such as *Infinity War*, *Christopher Robin*, *Marry Poppins Returns*, the *Black Panther* And the *Incredible 2* movie posters and focus on the semiotics signs found on those posters and only in 2018.

The writer uses documentation technique as stated by Arikunto, "*Dokumentasi adalah mencari dan mengumpulkan data mengenai hal-hal yang berupa catatan, transkrip, buku, surat kabar, majalah, notulen, raport, agenda dan sebagainya.*"¹⁴ Firstly, the writer searches the poster in the internet, then selects the poster especially Walt Disney's movie poster then downloading the poster from the internet to the devices. Second, while searching the poster the writer also observes which posters are going to be analysed by the writer. Then the writer notes and marks the important information about sign and poster from journal, e book and articles. That will useful in analyse the data. The writer chooses the posters that are distributed by Disney Company in 2018.

¹¹Fiske, john. *Introduction To Communication Studies* (second Ed). P. 86

¹² Fiske, john. *Introduction To Communication Studies* (second Ed). P. 88

¹³Hartley, john. *Communication, cultural and media studies: the key concept*, third edition. p. 153

¹⁴ Arikunto, S. (2006). *Metodologi Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Bina Aksara.p.158.

Finding And Analysis



Poster Avengers Infinity War

The qualisign found in the poster infinity war is color background which dominated by orange and dark blue, brown, hulk and gamora green skin and light in iron man's chest and hands. And also colorful sparkling in the middle of poster. Because the qualisign is about quality and color is include to qualisign. The sinsign found in the poster is the expression showed by the characters, the expression all of the characters are serious and focus and they stand like they were ready to war.

Denotative meaning from this movie is characters in a strange fields, seems like in other planet or space. The background colors are orange, dark blue and dark. There are verbal signs and the impression from the poster is mysterious, cool and attractive. Connotative meaning from the poster is as an advertisement tool that used to persuade the consumer more effective because poster contain different concept that make the consumer wondering to know about the movie. The background colors connote that there are many action in this movie. From the character pose and appearance indicates that the characters are not a normal human. Because some of them seems unlike human and have a super power.



Poster of Christoper Robin

The qualisign found in the poster infinity war is color background which dominated by white color and there are some colors that exist from the shirts and the stuff from the characters. Such as red color from pooh t-shirt, yellow from tiger fur color, grey from chris coat and Eeyore fur color, black from chris's hat and shoes color, pink and blue from piglet. This poster indicated that there are five main characters in this movie. They are christoper robin, pooh, piglet, tiger and Eeyore. The characters showed different expressions.

Denotative meaning from the poster are the background color is all white and there are some colors that exist from the shirts and the stuff from the characters. The white color is a color of snow and milk. Connotative meaning in this poster is a man with their childhood friends. He is an employee and he has a pure heart when he is adult, he still care about his old friend. Myth in this poster is from the background colors which is white and white indicates purity and this poster illustrate the sincerity of the characters in this movie.

The poster shows the attractive, mysterious, cool and impressive view. The background colors are orange, dark blue, brown and dark. The place in the poster is a strange field and from the top side of poster there are other planet and it seems the poster take place in space or other planet. The poster indicates that there are many main characters in this movie. In the poster there are icons of the character with serious expression and ready to war pose.



Poster of Marry Poppins

The qualisign in this poster is the color and background color which dominated by blue and red color and there are other colors that exist from the flower and umbrella. In this poster the expression of marry poppins is smiling and satre forward. The legisign is a rule or law how should something be, in this poster is based on Wierzbicka's color terms. Dark blue represents knowledge, power, integrity, and seriousness. Pink signifies romance, love, and friendship. It denotes feminine qualities and passiveness. The background colors indicates that in this movie Marry Poppins is a lovely and feminine. And she became a friend for banks family.

The denotative from the verbal sign is the Disney and marry poppins returns in white colored font. There are casts name and the date of release. The connotative from this sign is the Disney is a entertainment production company it means that this movie was made by Disney. Then the Marry Poppins is the tittle of the movie indicates that the main character in this movie is marry poppins. The "Returns" word in the tittle as a hint that there is another marry poppins movie before this movie. First Marry Poppins movie release on august 26th 1964 and this film is successful. The myth in this verbal sign is what people think when they see the poster, Marry Poppins must be a kind hearted because she is smiling and looks like a good woman.

This poster is simple and fresh with the color of background, the background color is blue with little brown touch from the buildings in the poster. Then there is pink color from the flower and there are some colors that exist from the clothes and the stuff from marry poppins. This poster indicates that the main character is marry poppins and she always bring her magic umbrella with her. The expression of Marry Poppins is smiling and it is beautiful smile and Marry Poppins itself is a beautiful woman and almost no flaws in her.



Poster of Black Panther

The qualisign found in the poster black panther is color background which dominated by dark blue and black. The sinsign found in the poster is the expression showed by the characters, the expression all of the characters are serious and focus. Two of them is smirking and some of them are holding the weapons. The legisign of sign is based on Wierzbicka's color terms that dark blue represents knowledge, power, integrity, and seriousness. Black color associated with power, elegance, formality, death, evil, and mystery.

Denotative meaning from the background colors or black and dark blue. Dark blue is a color of ocean, and black is the darkest color or the color of charcoal. There are nine main character with serious expression, the connotative meaning of the background color indirectly illustrate that the black panther must be black and give an overview about the movie. The myth for this poster is the hero with mysterious appearance to revenge to the enemy.

The poster shows the cool and unique view, because almost of the characters are black skinned people. The colors make it be mysterious. The background colors are blue, dark blue, and black. The place in the poster is a unique and high-tech place because there are the animal robot beside the characters. And almost all of them with serious expression, two of them is smirking and some of them are holding the weapons.

The correlation between the verbal and visual sign in this poster are the tittle of the movie is the verbal sign black panther, and the visual sign background colors are black and dark blue. The color of background indirectly illustrate that the black panther must be black and give an overview about the movie that Black Panther is an powerful, mysterious and formal being in this movie.



Poster of Incredibles 2

Qualisign in this poster is the background color which dominated by orange, black, green, purple and blue. The sinsign is the expression of the family is smirking except the little one he is smiling and from his eye such a power appearance. legisign is a term of color from Wierzbicka. Red of fire (orange) represent the whole background and the parr family suits and indicates as passion, love, and war. Black represent the mystery, death, and serious. Green, blue and purple is a power flash's color from the incredibles.

Denotative in this poster are characters, villain, ship, LRT with the background color. Orange is a fire and orange fruit color. Black is the darkest color. Connotative for this poster is a family with super power. As a hero the incredibles are helping the people and the world from the villain. The flash from the eyes and hand of violet and jack jack parr indicates the power. Myth for hero or everyone with super power is protecting the weak people and fight the enemy. the people believe that the hero always kind hearted.

Visual sign in the poster are a woman, a man, a little girl, an two little boys. They looks like have super power and behind them there are many people and burned city, there is strange thing with light eyes with ufo craft. a man, a little girl, an two little boys. They looks like have super power and behind them there are many people and burned city, there is strange thing with light eyes with ufo craft. The verbal sign is incredibles 2 in white colored font. There are casts name and the date of release. The correlation between the visual and verbal sign the visual showed that there are characters with super power and the verbal sign incredible 2 indicates that the superpower and the characters are incredible or amazing. Mostly visual give the illustration and the verbal sign to make sure the thing from the ambiguities. It is important to poster to contain both visual and verbal sign.



Poster of The Nut Cracker

The qualisign found in the poster the Nut Cracker is color background which dominated by blue, purple and dark. The sinsign found in the poster is the expression showed by the characters, the expression all of the characters are serious and focus. One of them is smirking and one of them is holding the magic egg. The legisign of sign is based on Wierzbicka's color terms that blue represents tranquillity, health, healing, understanding, and softness. Dark indicates evil, death and something gloomy.

Denotative meaning from the background colors blue and dark. blue is a color of sky, and dark is a gloom color or the color of stormy sky. There are eight main character with serious expression, the connotative meaning of the background color indirectly illustrate that the poster illustrates that many of main characters but expression of mother ginger or the orange haired woman seems like a villain or antagonist, the expression is smirking. Smirking is the evil smile that appear when she sees the bad thing happen to her enemy.

The color that dominated in the poster are purple, light blue and pink. Wierzbicka anna stated that Light blue is associated with health, healing, tranquillity, understanding, and softness. The movie contains some tranquillity place, and the softness from the behaviour of the main character. Pink color represents love, passion and warm. In this movie there are affection and love from each character and pink colored dress that use by character illustrate that the character is lovely and warm. And different world inhabited by different characters.

The visual sign in this poster is characters dressed like princess, fairy, royal servant, and villain. The background itself look like four domed palace. And the main characters are surrounded by the royal security. The colors that dominate in the poster are light blue, p purple and pink. And in the behind background there are dark world and colored world. It indicates that there are more than one world in this movie. The verbal sign is Disney the nut cracker and the four realms. And under the tittle there are the casts, producer and director name. Complete with place and date of release.

The correlation of the visual and verbal sign in this poster is the verbal sign will give more explanation about the poster, to make the poster easy to understand and persuade the consumers to watch the movie. For instance, the Nut Cracker and the characters illustrate that one of the main character is the Nut Cracker and the main character in this movie. And the Four Realms and the four domed palace, four realms means there are four world in this movie, because the palace has four dome. It is a hint that the four world in in the palace itself. And the casts name on the top of poster show that the main character in this movie are eight. And the four that wear eccentric suits illustrate the four different worlds.

Conclusion

Visual and verbal sign in this research are divided into six types or classification of sign. They are qualisign or the quality and it can be represented by background color, sinsign in this research is the expression of the characters, legisign or a rule or law here color term by wierzbicka anna and all colors are from the background color (qualisign), icon is the representation of the icon itself in this case the characters icon indicates the characters that will be in the movie, symbol is something that represent a thing even the thing is not exist in the poster. And argument are the information to public and dominated by verbal form. Those sign in visual and and verbal form. In those six posters, the most dominated appearance of color is dark blue, such as marry poppins, the nut cracker, the black panther, and infinity war most of background is blue with other complement color. Four posters contains dark color in the background except christoper robin ad incredibles2. Because christoper robin's background color only white and incredibles 2's background color is orange and striking.

Denotative meaning from the poster is taken from the meaning of color and the character but only from what appeared in the posters. But connotative meaning analyze the color and the character with deeper meaning or more than what on the poster, because connotative meaning also called as a hidden meaning. Myth analyze the meaning according to the culture or perception that growth in people or what people believe in. myth in poster infinity war is a big war that include the space and other planet, myth in christoper robin is a sincerity of the characters, myth in marry poppins is kind hearted woman in the spring season. Myth in Black panther is revenge to the enemy. The myth for incredibles is a superhero family. Myth for the nut cracker is a princess in four kingdom. The correlation of the visual and verbal sign in all posters is to complete each other in order to make the poster easy to understand and persuade the consumers with attractive appearance.

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