



SEMANTIC-STYLISTIC AND ACTUAL INTERFERENCE IN THE SPEECH OF UZBEK SPEAKERS IN THE PROCESS OF USING ENGLISH ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

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Abstract. This article investigates semantic-stylistic and actual cases of interference in the English academic vocabulary of Uzbek speakers. In the context of higher educational standards and increasing demand for academic English proficiency, interference remains a significant factor that influences the quality of bilingual academic communication. Analyzing interlanguage theory and cross-linguistic influence models, the research investigates how Uzbek linguistic structures affect lexical, stylistic, and semantic choices in English academic writing. The study includes a qualitative corpus-based approach, including lexical-semantic, discourse, and error analysis of around 50 academic texts produced by Uzbek EFL learners. The findings reveal that interference operates at multiple levels, such as: lexical transfer (e.g., direct translation of collocations), semantic mismatch (conceptual reinterpretation of academic terms), stylistic deviation (informal and redundant structures), and discourse-level organization issues. It is demonstrated that Uzbek learners frequently rely on native language patterns such as “make research” or “open the topic,” which is considered a deviation from English academic norms. The study highlights that interference is a systematic feature of interlanguage development rather than random error. The results point the need for explicit instruction in academic collocations, register awareness, and discourse organization in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) teaching contexts.

Keywords: interference; interlanguage; academic vocabulary; Uzbek speakers; semantic interference.

INGLIZ AKADEMIK LEKSIKASIDAN FOYDALANISH JARAYONIDA O‘ZBEK TILI SO‘ZLOVCHILARI NUTQIDA YUZAGA KELADIGAN SEMANTIK-STILISTIK VA FAKTIK INTERFERENSIYA

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot o'zbek tilida so'zlashuvchilarning ingliz akademik lug'atida semantik-stilistik va real interferensiyani o'rganadi. Yuqori ta'lim standartlariga va akademik ingliz tiliga bo'lgan ehtiyoj ortib borayotgan sharoitda interferensiya ikki tilli akademik muloqot sifatiga sezilarli ta'sir ko'rsatadi. Tillararo muloqot nazariyasi va tillararo ta'sir yondashuvlariga asoslanib, tadqiqot o'zbek tilining ingliz akademik yozuvidagi leksik, stilistik va semantik tanlovlarga ta'sirini tahlil qilib chiqadi. Tadqiqotda 50 ga yaqin o'zbek talabasi tomonidan yozilgan akademik matnlar asosida sifatli korpus tahlili, xatolar tahlili, leksik-semantik va diskurs tahlili qo'llanildi. Natijalar interferensiyaning bir necha holatlarda namoyon bo'lishini ko'rsatdi: leksik tarjima (masalan, kollokatsiyalarni bevosita tarjima qilish), semantik nomuttanosiblik (atamalar ma'nosini o'zgartirib qo'llash), stilistik o'zgarishlar (norasmiy va ortiqcha tuzilmalar) hamda matn tuzilishidagi muammolar. Tadqiqot "make research", "open the topic" kabi tuzilmalar ingliz akademik me'yorlariga mos kelmasligini aniqladi. Xulosa sifatida interferensiya tasodifiy jarayon emasligi, balki tillararo tizimining tabiiy qismi ekanligi tasdiqlandi. Tadqiqot ta'limida kollokatsiyalar, akademik uslub va diskurs ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirish zarurligini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: interferensiya; tillararo muttanosiblik; akademik lug'at; o'zbek tili; semantik interferensiya.

Introduction

In the context of intercultural communication and the internationalisation of higher education, English has firmly established its dominance in academic communication. The rising demand for academic literacy in English, particularly in non-English-speaking countries, has increased scholarly interest in the processes underlying second language acquisition and academic discourse production. Within this framework, the study of language interference has become increasingly relevant, as it directly affects the accuracy, clarity, and effectiveness of academic communication among bilingual speakers. Language interference, that is understood as the influence of a speaker's first language on the acquisition and use of a second language, is a very complex and multifaceted phenomenon that is revealed at various linguistic levels. According to Terence Odlin, cross-linguistic influence comprises not only structural transfer but also semantic and pragmatic dimensions of language usage. In a similar manner, Larry Selinker conceptualizes the target language as an evolving interlanguage system that is shaped by both native language transfer and internal developmental processes. Within this perspective, interference is not solely a source of errors but a natural and systematic component of language learning (Odlin 1989: 87).

Recent improvements in applied linguistics have altered attention from purely grammatical aspects of interference to more subtle and complex phenomena, including semantic and stylistic alterations in academic discourse. As mentioned by Rod Ellis, learner language mostly reflects underlying cognitive mechanisms and cannot be completely explained without considering the interaction between linguistic systems (Ellis 2015: 125). Furthermore, Zoltán Dörnyei stresses the role of cognitive and sociocultural factors in shaping language performance, specifically in formal and academic contexts. (Dörnyei 2009: 98). This shift also includes pragmatic competence, as learners often transfer first-language discourse conventions and communicative norms into second-language interaction. Kasper and Blum-Kulka argue that pragmatic transfer is a natural component of interlanguage development, influencing the appropriateness of language use across different communicative contexts (Kasper, & Blum-Kulka 1993: 202–234).

Despite the substantial nature of research on language interference, the majority of studies have been focused on phonological and grammatical alterations, while often overlooking the semantic and stylistic dimensions of academic vocabulary usage. This gap becomes particularly evident in the context of Uzbek-English bilingualism, where typological differences between the two languages — such as the agglutinative structure of Uzbek and the analytical nature of English — create special conditions for interference. Moreover, academic discourse rules in Uzbek and English differ notably in terms of lexical choice, analysis patterns, and stylistic norms, which further escalates the process of mastering English and academic vocabulary in educational context. The present study aims to address this research gap by mainly focusing on semantic and stylistic interference in the use of English academic vocabulary by Uzbek speakers. Special consideration is given to the ways in which native language patterns influence the selection, usage, interpretation, and functional characteristics of lexical units in academic contexts. The study proceeds from the assumption that interference at the semantic and stylistic levels plays a crucial role in forming learner discourse and may substantially affect its communicative clarity.

The aim of this research is to define and analyze the main types of semantic and stylistic interference in the academic English of Uzbek speakers. The objectives of the study are as follows: (1) to study the theoretical frameworks of language interference and interlanguage; (2) to consider the interaction between Uzbek and English linguistic systems in the domain of academic vocabulary; (3) to analyze typical patterns of semantic and stylistic interference in learner in the context of discourse; and (4) to

evaluate their impact on academic communication and the interchange of bilingual speech.

The novelty of the study is presented in its integrated approach to interference, encompassing semantic, stylistic, and analytical characteristics. Unlike previous studies that mainly focus on structural errors, this study highlights the importance of lexical and stylistic competence in academic communication. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies in English for Academic Purposes (EAP), particularly in multilingual educational contexts such as Uzbekistan.

In addition to its theoretical significance, the study holds practical implications for language teaching and curriculum design. Identifying similar interference patterns makes it possible to develop targeted instructional materials that highlight specific difficulties faced by Uzbek learners. Furthermore, the results may inform the design of assessment criteria for academic writing, taking into account the influence of interlanguage and cross-linguistic transfer. Thus, the study comprises the broader field of applied linguistics by providing a clearer understanding of how semantic and stylistic interference operates in bilingual academic discourse and by pinpointing the need for a more detailed approach to teaching academic vocabulary in a second language, as the phenomenon of language interference has long been a central topic in second language acquisition (SLA), particularly in researches addressing cross-linguistic influence and bilingualism. Earlier theoretical approaches were mostly grounded in contrastive analysis, which emphasizes that structural differences between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) come as the primary source of learner difficulties. However, subsequent research has also demonstrated that interference is a more complex phenomenon that involves not only structural but also semantic, pragmatic, and cognitive dimensions. A major conceptual breakthrough in highlighting learner language was introduced by Selinker, who developed the theory of interlanguage, defining it as a dynamic linguistic system shaped by both native-language transfer and internal developmental processes (Selinker, 1972: 123). Within this framework, interference is considered an inherent and systematic framework of second language acquisition rather than a mere deviation from the norm. This perspective is closely related to Corder's view that learner errors should not be regarded simply as deficiencies but as valuable evidence of the language learning process. According to Corder, errors reveal the strategies learners use in constructing their interlanguage and therefore provide important insights into second language development (Corder 1967: 166–167). James further

developed the principles of error analysis by arguing that learner errors should be systematically classified and interpreted according to their linguistic source. He emphasizes that distinguishing between transfer-induced errors and developmental errors allows researchers to better understand the mechanisms underlying second language acquisition and interlanguage development (James 1998: 178–180). Ellis further expanded this perspective by emphasizing that learner errors are unsystematic and reflect underlying cognitive mechanisms rather than random mistakes (Ellis 2015: 58). The role of cross-linguistic influence was accurately described by Odlin, who emphasized that language transfer functions across phonological, grammatical, lexical, and semantic levels (Odlin 1989: 93). Notably, Odlin argues that transfer is interchangeable in its effects: it may delay language production when structural differences become obvious, but it may also assist acquisition when similarities exist between L1 and L2. This dual nature of interference has become a widely accepted principle in contemporary SLA research. From educational perspective, Dörnyei points that language acquisition is mainly influenced by cognitive processing, motivation, and communicative strategies, and other phenomena which jointly determine how learners manage linguistic input and produce fluent output in a second language (Dörnyei 2009: 100). In this sense, interference is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a cognitive analysis that reflects how learners organize and retrieve linguistic knowledge.

A substantial contribution to the study of interference in multilingual contexts has been made by Makhanbet Djusupov, who extensively researched phonetic and systemic interference in Turkic–Russian bilingualism. Djusupov emphasizes that interference appears due to structural differences between language systems and becomes particularly evident in phonetic realizations, syllable structures, and prosodic patterns (Djusupov 1991: 34). His work is especially relevant for understanding Turkic-language speakers, including Uzbek learners of English, as it highlights the role of typological distance and articulatory habits in creating second language production. Recent studies continue to confirm the significance of linguistic interference in bilingual settings. Zhanpeisova argues that interference is conditioned by structural and typological differences between interacting languages and may manifest itself at phonological, lexical, grammatical, semantic, and syntactic levels. She also emphasizes that understanding these interference patterns is essential for developing more effective methods of second-language instruction in bilingual contexts (Zhanpeisova 2024: 115–119). In addition to structural approaches, recent research has increasingly focused on semantic and stylistic dimensions of interference, especially in academic discourse studies. Researches in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) present that

lexical competence involves not only knowledge of word meanings but also awareness of collocational, stylistic, and discourse-level constraints. In bilingual contexts, interference often leads to inappropriate lexical usage, literal translations, and stylistic deviations from academic norms.

Russian and post-Soviet linguistic scholarship has contributed significantly to the comprehension of semantic interference. Semchinsky, for example, describes semantic interference as the result of mismatches between conceptual and lexical systems of interacting languages (Semchinsky 1973: 23). Similarly, contemporary studies by Bekhbudy and Rogoznaya highlight that interference in academic discourse is closely connected to differences in rhetorical organization and text-building strategies (Bekhbudy & Rogoznaya 2025).

In the aspect of Uzbek-English bilingualism, research remains limited, particularly regarding semantic and stylistic interference in academic vocabulary usage. While phonetic and grammatical aspects have been partially presented, there is a clear lack of complete and systematic analysis of how Uzbek speakers formulate academic meaning in English. Considering the typological changes between Uzbek (agglutinative structure) and English (analytical structure), as well as differences in academic writing traditions, this gap is particularly relevant. Thus, the review of existing materials demonstrates that although the theoretical foundations of interference and interlanguage are well established, there is a clear need for more focused research on semantic and stylistic interference in academic discourse. The present study covers this gap by analyzing how Uzbek speakers use English academic vocabulary and how native language influence shapes their academic language production.

Methods

The present study comprises an accurate and descriptive research design that is aimed at identifying and analyzing semantic and stylistic interference in the academic English of Uzbek speakers. The methodological framework is mainly based on the principles of contrastive linguistics, interlanguage theory, and discourse analysis. The research material consists of written academic texts which are produced by Uzbek university students studying English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The corpus includes essays, summaries, and research-based tasks written in an academic context. The total dataset comprises approximately 50 written works collected during a one-semester academic period.

The analysis was conducted using the following methods:

- Contrastive analysis of Uzbek and English linguistic structures;

- Lexical-semantic analysis of academic vocabulary usage;
- Discourse analysis focusing on text organization and stylistic features;
- Error analysis to identify most frequent interference patterns.

The study highlights special instances where native language influence has its effect on lexical choices, semantic interpretation, and stylistic organization in English academic writing.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the texts revealed that semantic and stylistic interference is a recurrent and systematic phenomenon in the academic English of Uzbek speakers. The identified cases of interference can be classified into four main categories: lexical interference, semantic interference, stylistic interference, and discourse-level interference.

Lexical Interference

Lexical interference mainly occurs when Uzbek speakers directly transfer native lexical patterns into English academic vocabulary, often resulting in inappropriate word choice or calquing.

Examples:

- “*to make research*” instead of “to conduct research”
- “*to take part in science*” instead of “to participate in research”
- “*high knowledge*” instead of “deep knowledge”
- “*to give explanation to problem*” instead of “to explain the problem”

These errors reflect literal translation from Uzbek structures:

- “tadqiqot qilish” → *make research*
- “ilmda qatnashmoq” → *take part in science*

Such examples demonstrate that learners mostly rely on direct lexical transition rather than established English collocations.

Semantic Interference

Semantic interference appears when English words are used in meanings that are influenced by Uzbek conceptual structures.

Examples:

- “*actual problem*” used in the meaning of “current problem” (Uzbek: “haqiqiy muammo” confusion)
- “*educated article*” instead of “scientific article”
- “*strong idea*” instead of “convincing argument”
- “*to open the topic*” instead of “to introduce the topic”

These mistakes indicate that learners copy semantic associations from Uzbek into English, by ignoring contextual restrictions of academic vocabulary.

Semantic interference is particularly frequent in abstract academic terms, where conceptual equivalence between languages is partial or totally absent.

Examples:

- *actual problem* ← haqiqiy muammo
- *educated article* ← ilmiy maqola
- *scientific worker* ← ilmiy xodim
- *high result* ← yuqori natija
- *low knowledge* ← past bilim

Conceptual transfer examples:

- *to open the topic* ← mavzuni ochish
- *to close the idea* ← fikrni yopish
- *to give explanation* ← tushuntirish berish
- *heavy argument* ← kuchli dalil
- *soft evidence* ← zaif dalil

Stylistic Interference

Stylistic interference is reflected in the inappropriate use of informal or non-academic structures in formal writing.

Examples:

- “*In this essay I will write about...*” instead of “This paper examines...”
- “*It is very important thing*” instead of “It is of great importance”
- “*We can see that...*” instead of “It can be observed that...”

Another frequent issue is excessive explicitness, characteristic of Uzbek academic writing style:

- *“In conclusion, I want to say that...”*
- *“From my point of view I think...”*

Such constructions are not typical for English academic discourse, which prefers impersonal and mainly nominalized structures.

At the discourse level, interference affects the organization and coherence of academic texts.

Examples:

- Lack of clear paragraph structure
- Repetition of ideas instead of logical progression
- Direct translation of Uzbek rhetorical patterns

Example of problematic structure:

“First of all, science is very important. Because science assists people. Also science is useful. That’s why science is important.”

Correct academic version:

“Science plays a crucial role in human development as it contributes to technological and social progress.”

Another example:

- Uzbek pattern: inductive repetition of ideas
- English academic norm: deductive, thesis-driven structure
- The results confirm that interference in Uzbek learners’ academic English is not random but systematic and multi-layered. It reflects deep interaction between Uzbek and English linguistic systems at lexical, semantic, and stylistic levels.

The findings match with the interlanguage theory proposed by Selinker (Gass, & Selinker 2008) that suggests that learner language is an independent and systematic framework that is shaped by both transfer and developmental processes. At the same time, the observed errors support Odlin’s (Odlin 2003) assumptions that language transfer operates across all linguistic levels. Notably, semantic and stylistic interference appears to be rather persistent compared to grammatical errors,

suggesting that academic vocabulary acquisition requires not only lexical knowledge but also awareness of discourse conventions.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the present study provide a detailed structure of how semantic and stylistic interference operates in the academic English of Uzbek speakers. The analysis highlights that interference is not an isolated or accidental phenomenon but rather a systematic, multi-layered process that reflects deep interaction between the Uzbek and English linguistic systems. These results are consistent with interlanguage theory and contemporary views on cross-linguistic influence. The presented data strongly support the position of Larry Selinker, who defines learner language as an autonomous system that is formed by both transfer and developmental processes (Selinker 1972). The Uzbek learners' errors are not random deviations but rule-governed and systematic patterns, that indicate the presence of an internalized interlanguage system.

For example, recurrent constructions such as:

- *make research*
- *take part in science*
- *open the lesson*

show that learners consistently apply Uzbek syntactic models (e.g., *tadqiqot qilish*, *darsni ochish*) to English output. This confirms that interlanguage is structurally consistent and stable at intermediate stages and governed by L1-based cognitive assumptions.

Dominance of Lexical and Collocational Transfer

One of the most significant findings is the high repetition of lexical and collocational interference. Unlike grammatical mistakes, which tend to decrease with proficiency, lexical transfer remains persistent.

The data show that learners often:

- rely on direct and word-by-word translation of Uzbek collocations
- ignore fixed English academic combinations
- overgeneralize verb–noun structures

For instance:

- *do experience* instead of conduct an experiment

- *give explanation* instead of provide an explanation
- *strong knowledge* instead of deep knowledge

This suggests that lexical competence in academic English is not simply vocabulary-based but phraseological, that requires awareness of multi-word units. The findings align with Odlin's view that transfer operates strongly at the lexical level, particularly in collocational structures (Odlin 2003: 486).

Semantic Mismatch and Conceptual Transfer

A crucial result of the study is the presence of semantic interference that is caused by conceptual differences between Uzbek and English languages. Learners frequently assign meanings to English words based on Uzbek conceptual categories.

For example:

- *actual problem* (haqiqiy muammo) instead of current/pressing problem
- *educated article* instead of academic article
- *to open the topic* instead of to introduce the topic

These examples show that interference occurs not only at the linguistic and semantic level but also at the conceptual level, where learners transfer Uzbek meanings directly onto English lexical items.

This supports the assumptions of Swales, J. M., and Feak, C. B. that learner errors mostly reflect underlying cognitive processing rather than surface-level mistakes. It also confirms that semantic fields do not always overlap perfectly across languages, especially in academic discourse (Swales, & Feak 2012).

Stylistic Interference and Academic Discourse Incompetence

The analysis emphasizes that stylistic interference is clearly evident in the organization of academic discourse. Uzbek learners tend to transfer informal, conversational, and redundant structures into formal English writing.

Typical examples include:

- *From my point of view I think...*
- *In this essay I want to write about...*

- *It is very important thing...*

These constructions reflect Uzbek rhetorical traditions, which are more explicit and explanatory, often using repetition for emphasis (e.g., *men o'ylaymanki... fikrimcha...*).

In contrast, English academic style requires:

- impersonality
- conciseness
- nominalization
- hedging strategies

The differences indicate that learners have lexical knowledge but lack discourse competence, particularly in academic frameworks. This observation supports Hyland's view that academic writing competence extends beyond vocabulary and grammar to include genre awareness, audience expectations, and disciplinary conventions. Therefore, successful use of academic vocabulary depends on learners' ability to employ lexical items appropriately within the communicative practices of the academic community (Hyland 2006: 87–91).

Discourse-Level Interference and Text Organization

At the discourse level, the study identified significant difficulties in structuring rather coherent academic texts. Uzbek learners often produce texts characterized by:

- repetitive sentence patterns
- weak logical connectors
- absence of hierarchical argumentation
- linear rather than analytical reasoning

For example:

Science is important. Science helps people. Science is useful.

This reflects Uzbek rhetorical style:

Fan muhim. Fan odamlarga yordam beradi. Fan foydali.

While such repetition is acceptable in Uzbek oral and written conventions for emphasis, it contradicts English academic norms, that require argument development, logical progression, and cohesive devices.

This finding reflects Dörnyei's cognitive view of language production, where discourse organization depends on both linguistic competence and strategic processing (Dörnyei 2009).

Interference vs. Facilitation: Dual Nature

A significant observation is that interference is not entirely negative. In some cases, Uzbek linguistic structures assist comprehension and initial production in English. For example, learners successfully copy general syntactic ordering (Subject–Object–Verb tendencies in explanation chains) to build meaning in early stages of learning.

However, as academic demands increase, this facilitation turns into obstacle, especially in:

- academic collocations
- abstract vocabulary
- formal register usage

Thus, interference should be regarded as a dynamic mechanism, not a fixed error source.

Theoretical Implications

The findings extend interlanguage theory by demonstrating that:

1. Interference is consistent at lexical and discourse levels, not only at grammatical.
2. Semantic transfer is closely related to conceptual differences between languages.
3. Academic writing requires register-specific competence, which is often underdeveloped in learners learning two or more languages.

This supports Odlin's model of cross-linguistic influence (Odlin, T. 2003) and expands it to include academic discourse constraints.

Pedagogical Implications

The study suggests several implications for teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP):

- explicit teaching of academic collocations (e.g., conduct research, pose a question)
- training in academic register awareness

- contrastive analysis between Uzbek and English academic styles
- development of discourse structuring skills
- reduction of literal translation strategies

Such interventions may significantly reduce negative transfer while preserving positive facilitation effects. Overall, the findings confirm that semantic and stylistic interference in Uzbek learners' academic English is rather a systemic, multi-level phenomenon. It mainly reflects connected interaction between linguistic systems, cognitive processing, and academic discourse rules. The study highlights that improving academic English proficiency requires not only vocabulary acquisition but also the development of conceptual, stylistic, and discourse-level competence.

Conclusion

The article investigated semantic and stylistic interference in the use of English academic vocabulary by Uzbek users, with particular attention to its manifestation in learner academic writing. The research was grounded in interlanguage theory and cross-linguistic influence frameworks, and it used as a qualitative corpus-based analysis of academic texts produced by Uzbek EFL learners. The findings indicate that interference is a systematic, multi-level phenomenon that affects the lexical, semantic, stylistic, and discourse components of academic English. Among these, lexical and collocational interference were identified as the most consistent, indicating constant reliance on direct translation strategies from Uzbek into English languages. Semantic interference was found to result from conceptual differences between the two languages, leading to inappropriate meaning outputs in academic contexts. Stylistic interference revealed the influence of Uzbek rhetorical traditions, which tend to be rather explicit and repetitive, in contrast to the conciseness and impersonality required in English academic discourse. At the discourse level, learners exhibited difficulties in organizing accurate and logically structured academic texts, often relying on repetitive and linear argumentation patterns.

The study emphasizes the theoretical position of Larry Selinker that learner language represents an independent and dynamic system being shaped by both transfer of meaning and internal development. The results also support the cross-linguistic influence model that is proposed by Terence Odlin, particularly in correlation with lexical and semantic transferring processes. Furthermore, the findings assist in recognising cognitive and discourse-oriented perspectives of Rod Ellis, highlighting that learners reflect underlying cognitive strategies rather than random and unsystematic deviations.

A key contribution of this study can be the demonstration that semantic and stylistic interference plays a rather critical role in academic writing than was previously assumed, often persisting even at higher levels of language proficiency. This increases the importance of distinguishing between general language competence and academic discourse competence in second language acquisition.

From a pedagogical perspective, the results suggest that effective instruction in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) should go further than just including grammar-focused teaching and make sure to include explicit training in:

- academic collocations and phraseology
- register and stylistic conventions
- discourse organization strategies
- comparative awareness between Uzbek and English academic norms

Such an approach would assist in reducing negative transfer effects while supporting the development of more accurate and context-appropriate academic writing skills.

In conclusion, semantic and stylistic interference in Uzbek learners' academic English should be acquired not solely as an error phenomenon but as a natural outcome of bilingual language processing and interlanguage development. Further research may extend this study by incorporating larger corpora, spoken academic discourse, and comparative analyses with other Turkic language backgrounds to further improve understanding of cross-linguistic influence in academic settings

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