

The Themes Analysis in Hemingway's Novels Based on Corpus Techniques

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Abstract

This study aims to achieve two key objectives: (1) To investigate Hemingway's word choices on nouns in his novels that expressed the themes, using wordlist and keywords techniques. (2) To identify the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels through his word choices on nouns, using the Componential Analysis and AntConc (3.2.1.0). The population for this research includes Hemingway's nine novels and novellas. The sample is the population, providing a diverse representation of his thematic range. Research instruments for this study include a corpus analysis software tool, which facilitates the examination of linguistic patterns and thematic elements within the texts. For data analysis, descriptive statistics will be employed to quantify the frequency of identified themes and linguistic features, while componential analysis will provide context and depth to the findings, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how language shapes meaning in Hemingway's works.

The findings of this research reveal 14 unique themes prevalent in Hemingway's novels, including isolation, war, love, and the human condition. The analysis demonstrates that Hemingway's specific word choices and linguistic patterns significantly influence the interpretation of these themes, often reflecting his sociocultural context and personal experiences. For instance, the frequent use of terse, economical language underscores themes of existential struggle and emotional distance. Based on these findings, it is suggested that educators incorporate corpus methods into their curriculum, enabling students to engage with texts more analytically. This approach not only enhances their understanding of thematic complexity but also develops critical thinking skills essential for literary analysis. Additionally, further research could explore the application of corpus methodologies to other authors or genres, thereby broadening the scope of literary studies and enriching discussions around language and themes across a wider literary landscape.

Keywords: Hemingway's novels; corpus technique; Componential Analysis

Introduction

Since Hemingway's novels were published, a lot of academics have become quite interested in the themes and associated social events in his novels. For example, Ganjoo (2014) pointed out that Hemingway emphasized in *A Farewell to Arms* that life must be on the go and that one must be psychologically strong in the face of both life and battle, she also noted that Hemingway also blended themes of love, war, and death in this work. According to Lakshmi (2019), Hemingway depicts the conflict between nature and humans in *The Old Man and the Sea*. Hemingway frequently uses events from his own life to illustrate his points; in this case, he uses his own unfortunate experience with Santiago. According to Kholnazarova Rustam

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Qizi (2024), the theme of the Lost Generation is closely linked to World War I. Hemingway aims to depict the brutality of war, the hypocrisy of the government, and the effects on the civilian population. He also depicts the people who are aimless and disillusioned with life, and who turn to hedonism and escapism. In summary, a lot of academics studied only particular themes in particular novels written by Hemingway.

However, no scholar has yet studied the overall Hemingway's themes in his novels. This study will employ the corpus technique (Sinclair,1991), which uses a collection of Hemingway's nine novels, to investigate word choices and discover Hemingway's general themes communicated in his novels through word choices on nouns. With the use of componential analysis (Nida,1975), keywords in the context, and social context, Hemingway's word choices on nouns are grouped to pinpoint the overarching themes in his works.

In the paper, Hemingway's nine novels are included to investigate the word choices of nouns with corpus techniques and identify the themes with the help of componential analysis and corpus techniques. The related theories are employed in the paper: Themes in literature, corpus techniques, semantic field theory, and componential analysis are included.

According to Michael (2014), a theme in modern literary studies is the main idea, subject, or message that runs across a story. The implied position on the main idea or moral of a story is called a theme. Thus, nouns are the category that includes words that express themes

“Corpus techniques” refer to a set of methods used to analyze language use and patterns within large text collections, known as corpora (Sinclair, 1991). By utilizing these approaches, researchers can deepen their understanding of speech, syntax, vocabulary, and stylistic variations. Integrating corpus methodologies with qualitative analysis can enhance the theme analysis. This integration helps clarify the reasons and extent of scholars' intuitions.

The study also introduces Semantic Field Theory introduces the concept of semantic fields, defines their classifications, and explains how hyponymy helps identify keywords and frequently used nouns in Hemingway's literature. Additionally, componential analysis is addressed, linking it to Semantic Field Theory.

This study advocates for an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistic methodologies and literary analysis to enhance understanding of Hemingway's works and foster critical thinking among students. Through the use of AntConc(3.2.1.0) and other tools, the study emphasizes the importance of word choices in expressing deeper meanings and makes the case for an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistic methodologies and literary analysis. In the end, the study highlights the potential of digital tools for teaching literature and helps readers gain a deeper comprehension of both the complexity of the human condition and Hemingway's creative achievements.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate Hemingway's word choices on nouns in his novels that expressed the themes, using wordlist and keywords techniques.
2. To identify the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels through his word choices on nouns, using the Componential Analysis and AntConc (3.2.1.0)

Research Methodology

This section employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, which is divided into 3 parts as follows:

The 1st part of the quantitative method

Following the keyword list's sorting by keyness value, the parts of speech in the list are categorized using Excel spreadsheet skills. Following the completion of the keyword list, all nouns in the word list are sorted (by frequency) using the same Excel spreadsheet skills.

The 2nd part of the quantitative method

The nouns from the keyword list and word list are combined to form a noun list in Hemingway's novels for componential analysis. Therefore, the word choices in Hemingway's novels are investigated to answer the first objective.

The 3rd part of the qualitative method

A componential analysis of the noun list in Hemingway's novels is carried out to identify the themes in Hemingway's novels.

Therefore, all the themes are identified in Hemingway's novels to answer the second objective.

1. Population and Sampling

For the analysis of the keywords and the frequency of words, the population is Hemingway's novels (9 novels), 747,383 tokens in total, which is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Hemingway's novels collected for analysis

Name of Novels	Tokens	Publishing year
The Torrents of Spring	21,709	(1926)
The Sun Also Rises	68,970	(1926)
A Farewell to Arms	108,756	(1929)
To Have and Have Not	58,808	(1937)
For Whom the Bell Tolls	147,465	(1940)
Across the River and into the Trees	69,696	(1950)
The Old Man and the Sea	26,736	(1952)
Islands in the Stream	176,960	(1970)
The Garden of Eden	68,283	(1986)

Hemingway's nine novels provide as a sampling of his language choices, providing readers with a complete picture. Consequently, the sample data is the population of Hemingway's works. The nine novels ("txt" files) by the other Lost Generation Writers serve as a standard by which to find the precise and important words in Hemingway's works. According to Chang (2022), F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos, William Faulkner, James Thurber, and E. E. Cummings are the other writers from the Lost Generation. Consequently, as indicated in Table 2, nine novels by the other writers of the Lost Generation were chosen at random to serve as a reference corpus (778,827 tokens) to create a balanced corpus.

Table 2. The other Lost Generation writers' novels collected for analysis

Authors	Name of the novels	Tokens	Publishing year
James Thurber	Is Sex Necessary?	23,920	(1929)
	The 13 Clocks	12,215	(1950)
F.Scott Fitzgerald	The Great Gatsby	50,133	(1925)
	The Love of the Last Tycoon	46,826	(1941)
John Dos Passos	The 42nd Parallel	133,460	(1930)
	The Big Money	180,462	(1936)
E.E. Cummings	The Enormous Room	91,463	(1922)
William Faulkner	The Sound and the Fury	133,939	(1929)
	Absalom, Absalom!	106,409	(1936)

2. Research Instruments

In this study, four research instruments were used to answer the research questions: online tagger Free CLAWS web tagger (Lancaster. ac. UK); AntConc (3.2.1.0); Excel spreadsheet; Oxford Learner's Dictionaries.

(<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/chef?q=chef>).

The processes of constructing those instruments are as follows:

(1) Free CLAWS web tagger (Lancaster. ac. UK) is used to tag Hemingway's novels, for its accuracy rate amounts to 98%.

(2) AntConc (3.2.1 version)

To produce the word list of Hemingway's novels by word list.

To produce the keyword list of Hemingway's novels by keyword list.

(3) Excel spreadsheet

To classify parts of speech of the keyword list and wordlist respectively, and rearrange the order of the noun words by the Sort and Filter in the Excel spreadsheet.

Nouns are extracted by Excel spreadsheet skills from the keyword list and word list for further componential analysis.

combine the nouns from the keyword list and word list to form a noun list from Hemingway's novels for componential analysis, and reorder the noun list by sort from largest to smallest.

(4) Oxford Learner's Dictionaries

(<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/chef?q=chef>)

3. Data Collection

In this study, Hemingway's 9 novels or novellas are collected as the study corpus, and 9 novels from other Lost Generation writers are selected randomly as the reference corpus. All 18 novels are downloaded in PDF format from the open internet resources—Library Genesis(<https://libgen.is/>).

All 18 novels are transferred into "txt" files with the help of AntConverter software. Hemingway's nine novels ("txt" files) are merged into a single text before the instrument is processed, and this text is called Hemingway total (Ht). The nine novels ("txt" files) by the other Lost Generation Writers are merged into the other text and given the designation Other Lost Generation Writer total (LGt).

The process used in this study is to carry out a componential analysis of the noun words to determine the themes that Hemingway explored in his novels.

(1) Free CLAWS web tagger (Lancaster.ac.UK)

Free CLAWS web tagger (Lancaster.ac.uk) is an online tool used to tag Ht and LGt respectively and store the tagged texts on the computer.

(2) AntConc (3.2.1.0)

Download the AntBNC Lemma List (ver.004) from Laurence's website (<https://www.laurenceanthony.net/>) to combine terms from many word classes into a single entry in tagged Ht text. Lemmatization.

To create the keyword list and frequency words are also taken into analysis to identify the themes in Hemingway's novels.

Click the word list to produce the word list in Hemingway's novels, and save the result in the Excel spreadsheet.

(3) Excel spreadsheet

To identify the part of speech of all the keywords. Concordance and collocation are used to check the part of speech(nouns) for accuracy.

To identify the part of speech of all the frequency words and rearrange the order of the noun words by the Sort and Filter in an Excel spreadsheet.

To combine the noun words from the keyword list and word list, and name it as a noun list.

4. Data Analysis

In the study, the nouns in Hemingway's novels are used to identify his themes, with the help of componential analysis, keyword in the context, and social events.

(1) The componential analysis of the noun list in Hemingway's novels is carried out to identify the themes in Hemingway's novels, with the tool of the Online Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. Group the words according to previous studies on the themes in Hemingway's novels, by finding the denotative meaning of the words, and also grouping the words according to the universal themes (religion, justice, good vs. evil, etc.) in literature.

(2) group the words in Hemingway's novels according to their particular context. Because a novel is a discourse, the context dictates what words mean. Keyword in the context, or KWIC for short, is a technique used to extract a specific quantity of surrounding text, often a predetermined number of tokens before and after the node words, to assist organize the words in Hemingway's themes. This gives the background information needed to comprehend how the node terms are used and what they mean.

A specific amount of surrounding text is extracted by KWIC, often a predetermined number of words preceding and after the node words. This gives the background information needed to comprehend how the node terms are used and what they mean. Context size is readjusted from (default) 10 tokens to (maximum) 25 tokens, meaning that 25 tokens from the node words will be shown on the left and 25 tokens from the right to assist us in determining the precise meaning of the words.

In addition, a related text (read between the lines) is required because KWIC only displays 50 words that are connected to the node words, some of which have ambiguous meanings. After determining the precise meaning with the aid of the relevant text, the related words are grouped.

(3) Arranging the phrases according to social occasions or contexts. According to Fairclough (1995), language only has meaning in society, and the words a writer chooses to use always reflect his or her beliefs, experiences, and social developments. To interpret the

words and organize the nouns in the themes, the paper considers Hemingway's life experience as well as the social events of that era (Culpeper, 2015). In this round of grouping words, Hemingway's life experience and social background at that time will be the criteria.

5. Conceptual Framework

In this study, Hemingway's word choices on nouns in his novels that expressed the themes are investigated and the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels through his word choices on nouns are identified. Hemingway's 9 novels are included as the study corpus, and 9 novels are randomly selected from other Lost Generation writers as the reference corpus. The nouns from the keyword and word list are extracted and combined into the noun list from Hemingway's novels with the help of AntConc. The componential analysis is carried out to identify the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels, including the themes in the previous studies and universal themes in literature. KWIC and the specific context in the related paragraph are employed to determine the exact meaning of the nouns. To ensure all the themes are identified in Hemingway's novels, social occasions and contexts are also needed to help group the nouns into the themes expressed.

The study provides important light on the thematic landscape of Ernest Hemingway's works by showing how linguistic decisions can open doors to further in-depth thematic investigation. We have been able to methodically classify and examine the themes found in Hemingway's writing by utilizing corpus-based methodologies, through the investigation of the word choices and the identification of the themes expressed through the investigation of the word choices.

Research Results

By applying the AntConc keyword technique and wordlist to investigate Hemingway's word choices on nouns in his novels that expressed the themes, and to identify the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels through his word choices on nouns, using the Componential Analysis and AntConc (3.2.1.0), the findings are summarized as follows:

1. 2,649 nouns are found in Hemingway's varied word choice

Keyword and wordlist techniques are used to investigate Hemingway's word choices on nouns in his novels, according to the keywords list produced by the AntConc, there are 1,049 keywords in Hemingway's novels: 359 verbs, 310 nouns, 72 adjectives, and 36 adverbs, alongside 272 functional words. In this paper, only nouns are picked out to identify Hemingway's themes with the componential analysis.

The Frequency of words is also considered to consider Hemingway's word choices on nouns. According to the word list produced by the AntConc, there are 747,383 words in Hemingway's novels: 178,771 verbs, 144,368 nouns, 36,497 adjectives, and 52,252 adverbs, alongside 261,680 functional words and 73,815 determiners. In this paper, only nouns are picked out to identify Hemingway's word choices on nouns.

Hemingway's word choice for nouns is identified through the combination of nouns from the keyword list and word list, deleting the overlapping nouns, the plural forms of nouns, and the nouns with other parts of speech. Hemingway's word choice for nouns from the keyword list is 310 words, and for nouns from the word list is 2,649, and discovering that all nouns on the keyword list overlap with the nouns from the word list. Therefore, Hemingway's word choice on nouns is 2,649 words in total.

2. 14 themes identified in Hemingway's novels through his word choice of nouns

Componential analysis of Hemingway's nouns is carried out, with the help of KWIC, and social events, to identify the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels. the finding is: there are 9 themes in previous studies of Hemingway's novels and 5 discovery universal themes. The themes in previous studies are alienation, love, war, Lost Generation, death, nature, existentialism, code hero, and feminism, and the 5 discovery universal themes are religion, power, knowledge, justice, and good vs. evil.

The number of nouns grouped in 14 themes (2,429), Group 1 is the themes identified in previous studies (9 themes) shown in Table 3, and Group 2 is the discovery of universal themes (5 themes) in Hemingway's novels shown in Table 4.

Table 3 The themes identified in previous studies of Hemingway's novels

Group 1: The themes in previous studies in Hemingway's novels		
themes	The number of words	Total number
Lost Generation	533	1,892
Nature	473	
War	402	
Existentialism	216	
Feminism	61	
Love	56	
Code hero	56	
Death	50	
Alienation	45	

According to the table, the theme of Lost Generation gathers the most noun words (533), then nature (473), war (402), existentialism (216), feminism (61), code hero (56), death (50), alienation (45).

Table 4 The discovery of universal themes in Hemingway's novels

Group 2: The discovery of universal themes in Hemingway's novels		
themes	The number of words	Total number
power	211	537
knowledge	192	
Good vs. evil	62	
religion	58	
justice	14	

According to the table, the universal theme of power gathers the most noun words (211), and then knowledge (192), good vs. evil (62), religion (58), love (56), and justice (14).

After the grouping, the grouped words are 2,429, and the ungrouped words are 220 words. Only 22 words whose frequency is more than 10, and most words occur only twice or once.

In conclusion, 14 themes in Hemingway’s novels are illustrated in Figure 1:

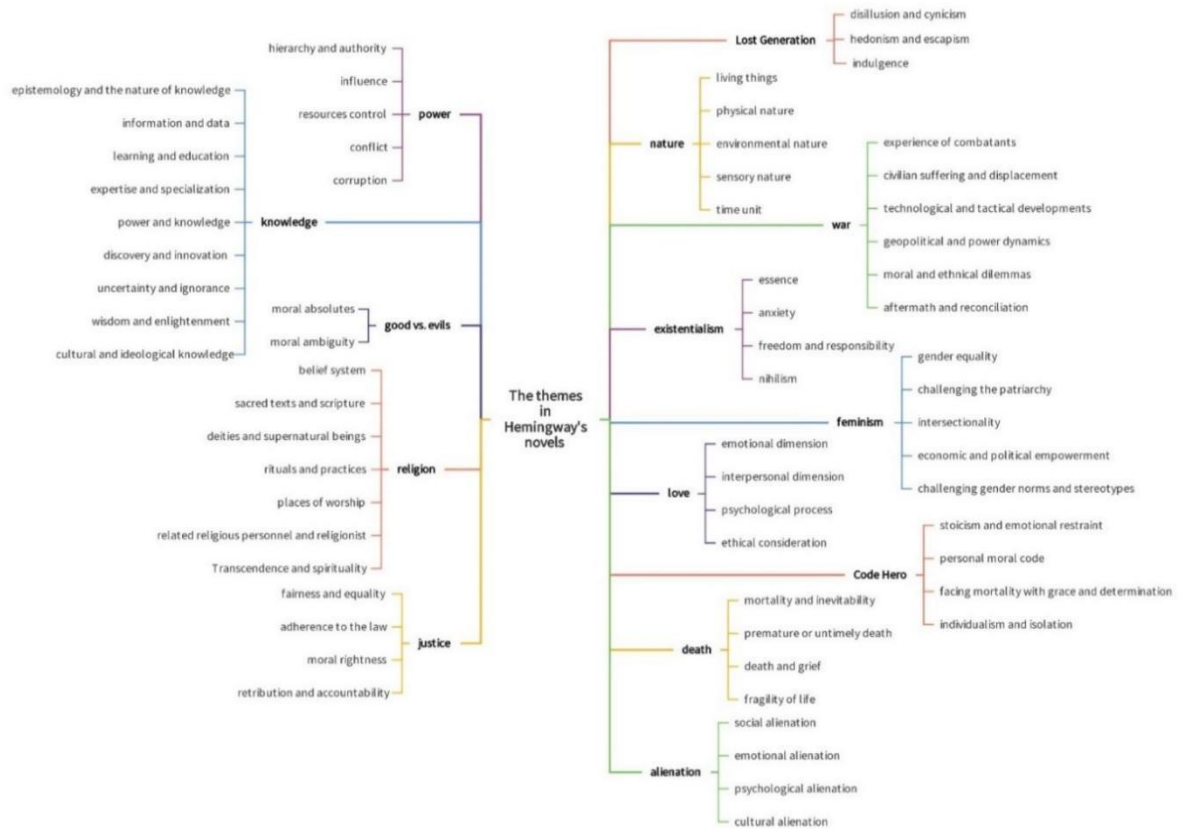


Figure 1 14 Themes identified in Hemingway's novels
(Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2024)

Discussion

The discussion section contextualizes the research results into the thematic landscape of literary works and the integration of corpus techniques. The following points are highlighted:

The research objectives focus on investigating word choices on nouns, identifying the themes expressed in Hemingway’s novels through his word choices on nouns, and showing how linguistic decisions can open doors to further in-depth thematic investigation. Using corpus techniques, we have methodically classified and examined the themes in Hemingway's writing. This has allowed us to uncover some significant aspects of the author's style and thematic interests.

Research objective 1

The research aims to investigate the word choices on nouns in Hemingway’s novels that expressed the themes, using word and keyword list techniques, and found that there are 2,649 nouns through the combination of word and keyword list from Hemingway’s novels. the reason for this is Hemingway prefers to use many nouns in different parts of speeches to show the variety and his mastery of the words (Hoffman, 2018)). At present, no scholar pays attention to the word choices on nouns in Hemingway’s novels that expressed the themes, using word and keyword list techniques.

Research objective 2

The research aims to identify the themes expressed in Hemingway's novels through his word choices on nouns, using the Componential Analysis and AntConc (3.2.1.0), and found that there are 14 themes expressed in Hemingway's novels, including 9 themes in previous studies and 5 discovery universal themes. The findings are consistent with the 9 themes in Hemingway's novels in previous studies. Such as Hoffman (2015) explores how the war theme shapes the narrative structure and character development in Hemingway's fiction. Baker (2017) investigates the masculinity and emotional vulnerability in Hemingway's novels. Smith (2018) the relationship between nature and human isolation in Hemingway's works. Johnson (2020) argues that Hemingway's characters often grapple with meaninglessness and despair to illustrate the theme of existentialism. Garcia (2021) highlights the emotional depth and complexity of human connection to examine how themes of love and loss permeate Hemingway's novels.

However, 5 universal themes are being discovered in Hemingway's novels, which is inconsistent with the studies in literature. The reason for this is most scholars tend to relate Hemingway's themes to the social context only but neglect the connection between language and thematic exploration, and the fact that themes that are deeply rooted in the author's linguistic choices.

1. Reflection:

The study highlights the connection between language and thematic exploration, showing that linguistic patterns enhance our understanding of literary works. By integrating linguistics with literary criticism, the study reveals that themes are deeply rooted in authors' linguistic choices. Additionally, the methodology provides a framework for future research, emphasizing the importance of relational meanings of words in understanding how language shapes thematic expression in literature.

Despite using corpus-based methodologies to offer insightful thematic analysis of Hemingway's works, this study has several limitations.

(1) Text Scope: The analysis mainly concentrates on nine novels, which might not cover all of the issues found in Hemingway's larger body of works, which also include his non-fiction writings and short stories.

(2) Diversity and Size of the Corpus: The results' potential to be applied broadly may be hampered by their reliance on particular texts. The robustness of the analysis could be improved and new thematic insights could be obtained with a larger and more varied corpus.

(3) Interpretative Subjectivity: The way themes are categorized is essentially subjective and can change based on how different people perceive the texts. Subsequent investigations may integrate many viewpoints to corroborate and enhance the theme classifications.

2. Conclusion

Through a corpus analysis, this study has examined the themes in Ernest Hemingway's works, illuminating the complex link between word choice and thematic representation. We discovered 14 major themes that arise from Hemingway's linguistic patterns by using technologies of AntConc and componential analysis. The results highlight the close relationship between Hemingway's distinctive language style and his thematic concerns, indicating that language plays a key role in meaning formation rather than only serving as a means of conveying stories. Furthermore, using corpus approaches encourages a data-driven

method in the field, offering a flexible foundation for future literary research. This study's integration of linguistics and literary studies not only improves our understanding of Hemingway's stories but also encourages interdisciplinary inquiry among academics and students.

Suggestions

Suggestions for Future Research on Hemingway's Themes

1. **Expand the Corpus** Future research should encompass Hemingway's entire body of work, including his novels, short stories, and non-fiction writings. This comprehensive approach will facilitate a deeper understanding of his stylistic nuances and thematic concerns, providing a more holistic view of his literary contributions.

2. Diversify the Methodology

To enhance the robustness of the findings, researchers should strike a balance between quantitative and qualitative methods. Utilizing statistical analysis alongside interpretative frameworks ensures that numerical data enriches rather than overshadows literary interpretation, leading to more nuanced conclusions.

3. Incorporate Varied Academic Perspectives

Engaging with a wide range of academic viewpoints can enrich discussions surrounding Hemingway's writing. By validating thematic categorizations through different critical lenses—including feminist, psychological, and post-colonial theories—scholars can foster more dynamic debates and insights.

4. Conduct Comparative Studies

Extending corpus-based techniques to other authors or literary movements will allow for comparative analyses that can illuminate broader conversations about language and themes in literature. Such studies could reveal connections and contrasts between Hemingway and his contemporaries, enhancing our understanding of his unique position in literary history.

5. Focus on Recurrent Themes Across Genres

A detailed examination of recurring themes in Hemingway's work across various genres and periods is essential. Identifying these themes will not only contribute to the field of Hemingway studies but also offer insights into the evolution of his literary voice and the socio-cultural contexts that influenced him.

6. Encourage Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Collaborating across disciplines—such as literature, history, psychology, and cultural studies—can yield fruitful insights into Hemingway's themes. Interdisciplinary research can deepen the contextual understanding of his works and the issues they address.

7. Investigate Reader Reception and Influence

Future studies should also consider the reception of Hemingway's works and their influence on subsequent writers. Analyzing reader responses and critical reception over time can illuminate how Hemingway's themes resonate with different audiences and inform contemporary literature.

These suggestions aim to promote a more in-depth examination of Hemingway's creative output and demonstrate the potential of corpus methods in literary analysis. By adopting a multifaceted approach, future research can significantly enhance our understanding of Hemingway's themes and their relevance in both historical and contemporary contexts.

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