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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA TO THE WORLD

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Abstract

The study shows how these methods influence the novella's thematic concerns—struggle, loneliness, and human dignity—through attentive reading and linguistic analysis. The research also discusses Hemingway's language choices' wider ramifications within the framework of modernist literature and how they enhance the text's emotional resonance and psychological depth. Linguists, literary analyzers, and everyone else interested in the relationship between language structure and literary effect will find this study to be useful.

Keywords: Thematic analysis, struggle, loneliness, human dignity, modernist literature, language and emotion, psychological depth, literary linguistics, language structure and literary effect

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway's unique writing style, sometimes known as the "iceberg theory" or theory of omission, has earned him widespread recognition. His writing is characterized by understatement, accuracy, and simplicity; it emphasizes surface details while implying deeper ideas. Short sentences and simple terminology that transmit emotion subtly rather than overtly are preferred in Hemingway's writing over complex language. The novella *The Old Man and the Sea*, which was released in 1952, is a prime example of Hemingway's developed writing style. After a lengthy period of terrible luck, the movie follows Santiago, an elderly Cuban fisherman, as he embarks on an epic quest to catch a

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gigantic marlin. Despite its seeming simplicity, the book is full with symbolism and delves deeply into subjects like human nature, dignity, isolation, and tenacity. Hemingway's sparse yet powerful use of language, combined with carefully chosen stylistic devices, creates a narrative that is both accessible and deeply resonant.

Lexico-Syntactical Analysis of Characters in The Old Man and the Sea

1. Santiago

Short, Declarative Sentences: Hemingway often uses brief and simple statements to reflect Santiago's clarity of mind and resilience.

Example: "Fish, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends."

Stylistic function: The directness reflects Santiago's practicality and moral code. It emphasizes the internal conflict without overstatement.

Repetition and Parallelism: Hemingway uses these to show Santiago's persistence and reinforce his thoughts. **Example:** "He is my brother. But I must kill him."

Function: Highlights the paradox of love and necessity, humanizing Santiago's struggle. **Inner Dialogue / Rhetorical Questions:**

Example: "What beat you, old man?" he thought. "Nothing," he said aloud.

Function: Reveals Santiago's pride, resilience, and psychological depth using minimal exposition.

2. Manolin (The Boy)

Simple, Reverent Language: The boy's speech is respectful, affectionate, and marked by short exchanges. **Example:** "I'll bring the sardines. Where do we fish tomorrow?" **Function:** Reflects devotion and a mentor-student bond, expressed through humble language.

Dialogue Syntax: Hemingway uses naturalistic, sometimes repetitive dialogue to show the deep but quiet bond between Santiago and Manolin.

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Their conversations are rhythmic and often filled with unspoken understanding, conveyed through syntax rather than elaborate speech.

3. The Marlin and Sharks (Symbolic Characters)

Described through metaphors and parallelism, not direct dialogue. Example (about the marlin): “He is a great fish and I must convince him.”

The marlin is personified; lexico-syntactical choices elevate it as a noble adversary.

Asyndeton and polysyndeton in action scenes (especially with the sharks):

Example: “He hit it without hope but with resolution and complete malignancy.”

Examining how Ernest Hemingway uses lexico-syntactical style methods to improve topic expression and character characterization in *The Old Man and the Sea* is the aim of this analysis. This study attempts to demonstrate how Hemingway's minimalist style serves not only aesthetic purposes but also psychological and symbolic depth by concentrating on the linguistic structure of his sentences, specifically the portrayal of Santiago's inner strength, moral convictions, and human struggle. Examples of these linguistic structures include repetition, parallelism, rhetorical questions, and syntactic simplicity.

Interpretation and role of *The Old Man and the Sea*'s primary characters, emphasizing how each one adds to the deeper meanings of the novella: Character Interpretation and Purpose in *The Old Man and the Sea* the Old Man, or Santiago Santiago represents perseverance, self-respect, and the human spirit's unwavering determination. He develops into a Christ-like figure by his seclusion and quiet battle against nature, bearing suffering with grace. He demonstrates moral courage, honor, and the belief that true success is found in the struggle rather than the result in his battle with the marlin, which goes beyond a simple struggle for existence. Function: He stands for the existential notion that significance is found in tenacity rather than triumph and the universal theme of man and nature.

(The Boy) Manolin Hope, consistency, and unconditional love are all represented by manolin. Despite his youth, he acts as a spiritual and moral pillar for Santiago.

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His devotion highlights the generational transmission of virtues like religion, loyalty, and respect and stands in contrast to others' apathy. Manolin serves to humanize Santiago, add emotional nuance, and represent the future, guaranteeing that Santiago's principles will endure.

Marlin A formidable foe that is nearly as strong and dignified as Santiago, the marlin is more than just a fish. Santiago's reverence for the marlin turns their conflict into a parable about the noble battles of life. Function: The marlin represents the beauty, difficulty, and majesty of nature. Additionally, it symbolizes an ideal that is ultimately unreachable or irreparable, emphasizing the tragic beauty of human striving.

The sharks are ruthless, destructive creatures that stand in sharp contrast to marlin. They stand for deterioration, loss, and the forces that try to undermine what is honorable or hard-won. Function: They stand for the harsh fact that despite one's best efforts and noble intentions, outside factors can nonetheless deprive one of material prosperity.

The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway serves as a profound allegory of human dignity, resiliency, and the existential search for purpose. Beyond its straightforward plot—an elderly fisherman's struggle with a gigantic marlin—the novella delves into universal themes like loneliness, tenacity, and the struggle between nature and humanity. Hemingway's philosophical viewpoint—that true heroism resides in inner strength and persistent determination rather than external success—is communicated through Santiago's character. The minimalistic style of the book also echoes Hemingway's "iceberg theory," which holds that a large portion of the emotional and symbolic weight is hidden beneath the surface. The sea itself serves as a vast, uncaring force that reflects the unpredictable nature of life and is at once a source of mystery, struggle, and life.

Through this symbolic and stylistic economy, The Old Man and the Sea affirms the value of personal struggle and the quiet nobility of enduring hardship with grace and humility. The Old Man and the Sea is a classic of international literature

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because it touches on universal human emotions including pride, perseverance, hardship, and the pursuit of meaning. Because of its universal themes, which transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, readers anywhere can relate to it. The novella helped Hemingway win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954 and restored his literary reputation when it was published in 1952. Its significance also stems from its stylistic impact: Hemingway's straightforward, spare style helped to define modern fiction and showed that profound emotional impact may be expressed with simplicity. Beyond literature, the story is pertinent to education, psychology, and cultural studies because it provides philosophical insights regarding human dignity and perseverance in the face of adversity.

The Old Man and the Sea was written primarily to confirm Ernest Hemingway's literary legacy and to examine basic human themes of struggle, tenacity, and the relationship between man and environment. Hemingway attempted to revert to the themes and writing style that had brought him fame during a period of literary decline and personal hardship. He aimed to write a story that was straightforward yet meaningful, emphasizing the dignity of human struggle and the bravery needed to confront life's unavoidable obstacles. Hemingway sought to portray a person's struggle with inner anguish, pride, and self-worth in addition to external forces like the sea and the marlin through the figure of Santiago. His conviction in the "noble struggle"—that real heroism is not found in winning but rather in enduring adversity with dignity and honor—is reflected in the novella. More broadly, Hemingway wanted to write a universal tale that would appeal to people from all walks of life and solidify his status as one of the 20th century's most influential writers.

1. Revisiting His Early Themes of Struggle and Heroism

Hemingway's goal with *The Old Man and the Sea* was to return to the thematic heart of his earlier works, particularly the concept of the “noble struggle.” Santiago’s battle with the marlin reflects this idea, where heroism is defined by the effort itself, rather than the outcome. This was a crucial aim for Hemingway

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after his earlier works had portrayed war, love, and loss. Through Santiago, Hemingway emphasized that true dignity lies in perseverance, even in the face of overwhelming odds and inevitable failure.

2. Reclaiming His Literary Reputation

At the time Hemingway wrote *The Old Man and the Sea*, his career was experiencing a period of decline, and he sought a way to prove that he could still produce powerful, relevant work. The novella served as both a personal and artistic comeback. By crafting a short, simple yet symbolically rich narrative, Hemingway aimed to show that his literary voice was still alive, relevant, and capable of conveying deep meaning in a minimalistic style. This was particularly important given that Hemingway's fame had been overshadowed by his personal troubles and the passage of time.

3. Exploring the Spiritual and Philosophical

While Hemingway is often thought of as a writer focused on action and external conflict, *The Old Man and the Sea* reveals a more introspective side. Hemingway used the novella to explore existential and spiritual questions, particularly regarding the meaning of suffering and the human condition. Santiago's internal dialogue about his fight with the marlin touches on themes of pride, humility, and man's need for validation, especially in a world where success is often elusive. The marlin itself becomes a spiritual and philosophical foil to Santiago, representing the ultimate challenge, and in some interpretations, a Christ-like symbol.

4. Mastering the "Iceberg Theory"

Hemingway's minimalist style, often referred to as the "Iceberg Theory," was central to *The Old Man and the Sea*. By simplifying language and focusing on surface-level action, Hemingway aimed to convey much deeper themes and emotional states beneath the narrative. He believed that if the writer could present the facts and details cleanly, the deeper truths would resonate with the reader implicitly. This approach was a hallmark of Hemingway's writing, and in *The*

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Old Man and the Sea, it allowed for subtle, layered meanings to emerge from the simplicity of the prose.

5. Addressing the Relationship Between Man and Nature

A significant intention in *The Old Man and the Sea* was to examine the complex relationship between man and nature. Santiago's battle with the marlin is not just physical—it's a symbolic confrontation between human will and the indifferent forces of nature. Hemingway's portrayal of this battle reflects his belief that nature is both beautiful and cruel, and that humans are at its mercy, yet must strive to coexist with it. Through Santiago's reverence for the marlin and his struggle to conquer it, Hemingway explored themes of respect, challenge, and the balance between man's power and the vast forces of the natural world.

6. Symbolism of Isolation and Personal Redemption

Isolation is a key theme in *The Old Man and the Sea*. Santiago's solitude on the sea reflects not just his physical isolation, but also his emotional and existential distance from the world. Hemingway used this isolation to explore deeper ideas about personal redemption and individual courage. Santiago's solitary struggle serves as a metaphor for the human condition—the idea that, ultimately, each person must face life's challenges alone. However, in doing so, they can achieve personal redemption and self-actualization.

These particular elements demonstrate that Hemingway wrote *The Old Man and the Sea* with a number of goals in mind, including reviving his career, examining timeless subjects, and experimenting with his distinctively minimalist style. Each of these components adds to the novella's lasting importance.

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