

# Application of the Scientific Approach of Discourse Analysis on Deciphering of the Novels: Illustration by Reference to “*Orlando*” and “*Across the River and into the Trees*.”

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## ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to shed the light on the similarities in literary styles of two famous novels “Orlando” and to “Across the river and into the trees”. To reach this purpose, the author attempted to analyze the content of the two novels through adopting scientific approach.

The present article put forward a new methodology of analysis in linguistics that relies on the discourse analysis issue, the latter has been recently developed to facilitate understanding the main content of any speech by utilizing technology. The discourse analysis was previously utilized to analyze the meaning of politicians, and it was highly implemented in media to expose the major purpose of any political speech. The empirical investigation allowed us to denote that authors of contemporary literature attributed prime attention for the psychological interactions occurring inside the principal character of the novels. In fact, these obsessions are also happening inside the authors themselves, we could infer this from the similarities collected from the novels between author and principal character.

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## 1. Introduction

The topic of discourse analysis is recurrent in empirical researches and/or it can be clearly manifested in various disciplines such as politics and literature. The focus of the content analysis on political speeches is not arbitrary and is not limited to explore the politicians’ intentions. In fact, it can be easily argued that many politicians are using the services of famous writers to elaborate their speeches, and get their messages across to their audience. The focusing of political discourse in several countries on writing styles is not a new association, it appears that several authors with literary background such as: Winston Churchill, Dominique de Villepin and Mahatma Gandhi, etc. made successful political carriers.

The evolution of writing styles and the content advances in literature enabled us to discover that readers do not like to spend a longtime reading stories. For the same reason, we recorded the advent of new scientific approaches of analysis that relied on statistics and rigorous calculations to explore the content of the speeches. It seems obvious that the rapid development of computers has significantly contributed to facilitate implementing the scientific methods for interpreting the major content of discourse.

The modern approaches of content analysis contributed to provide new explanatory framework and understanding perspectives of novels of modern literature. The recent methodologies attribute prime attention for considering the psychological interaction and religious thoughts inside the principal character. The current finding relies on the background of the writer itself as reflecting the same feelings and interaction, included in the lines of these novels.

### 1.1 History

#### • *Origin of Discourse Analysis*

Any thought on the history of discourse analysis raises formidable difficulties. However, the reconstruction of this history is heavily dependent on conceptions of discourse and discourse analysis, or the mixture of the two.

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In 1960, we recorded the birth of new styles of novels writing - especially in Western Europe and the United States -that relied on various disciplines and raised the question related to the new activity of language in modern literature compared to the traditional style of writing.

These current findings rely on the discourse analysis of the French school of Pêcheux(1969). Others are from the science of language: grammar text, theories of enunciation. Others range from anthropology and literary, in the case of the ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1971; Gumperz, 1989).

These various lines of research are strongly influenced by the pragmatic, understood as a linguistic and communication concept, and to a lesser extent by the theories of linguistic utterance.

The merely analysis of the literature about the discourse analysis authorized us to refer to G. Bateson, M. Foucault and Bakhtin who contributed significantly in the field of linguistics in general, and especially through applying the discourse analysis. Their advances recorded enhancement in the methodologies, making possible the emergence of new approaches to analyze the linguistic content of novels.

The current development does not imply a doctrinal convergence. The researchers attempted to improve the foundation of the discipline by examining each other's development; they often participate in the same activities, journals, conferences, books, etc.

From the perspective of Europe, we can briefly distinguish three different phases in the development of discourse analysis:

- In the 1960s a number of new issues are taking place, driven by structuralism, where language plays a leading role.
- In the second half of the 1970s a first convergence occurred primarily in Europe, to be a field of discourse analysis. The language sciences played an essential role such as developing approaches that relied on grammar text or the advent of enunciation theories.
- From the 1980s, the American thinkers contributed in studying the discourse analysis problematic. they developed new foundations for studies of the speech.

• *Origins of Literary Theory*

In the Anglo-Saxon world, the relationship between literary and discourse analysis is narrow and the boundaries are difficult to draw (Dittmar, 2002). Labov (1978) has mentioned his interest in communication practices through elaborating new variants of linguistics and analyzing the linguistic features of Black American English. Several researchers attempt to describe wider communicative practices of young black ghetto of Harlem (1978).

The distinction between sociology of language and literary content, has been a recurring debate, starting in 1976 by J. Boutet, P. Fiala and J. Simonin-Grumbach (1976), it was recently updated in the latest number of *Language and Society* (Varro, 1999).

## **1.2. The Relationship**

Literary and discourse analysis grow in a space of discursive and linguistic practices invested in the linguistic sciences. The reach of development relies on elaborating constitutive interaction with other fields of social sciences and humanities. As we will show, several linguistics notions such as discourse, literary and conversation analysis specialists, etc., shared a number of assumptions and conceptual and methodological resources.

It seems obvious that verbal practices can hardly relate to an institutional place or ideological positioning. A sociolinguist is a priori reluctant to analyze the institutional press or political speeches. In fact, whatever the differences between the approaches of discourse analysis and literary content, they could be considered as metaphorically designated as background movements. We mean the development of a common intellectual horizon that could be divided into two interrelated areas: the construction method of data analysis methods and the design of language activity.

The distinction between literary and discourse analysis lies in the grounds of both their purpose and operation of scientific communities. The observation conferences, media publications, references researchers show that these two disciplines do not occupy the same space, although in many instances, they are required to participate in the same activities.

### **1.3. Conclusion**

Finally, there are two points of clarification: the first focuses on the non-religious meaning of the character, in the words of Labov (1988), analyzing the discourse and literary content. Calvet (1999), Boutet and Gardin (2001) attempted to solve the questions related to linguistics and discourse analysis and the real world. The discourse analysts as sociolinguists often came to assume a scientific position. In particular, the description and analysis of language continued to cause heated debates in the light of the critics raised on the topic of discourse analysis.

The second point of clarification, concerning the reconfiguration of knowledge that is taking place and in terms of any particular discourse analysis and literary content. In fact, the global nature of research in the humanities and social sciences are highlighted in both disciplines. It continues to affect several types of speech that are not separated by borders as tightly as it was in the past. The study of literary discourse and philosophical discourse that make up the main purpose of the present paper, mobilizes the same kind of interactionist approaches. We are asserting the emergence of triple different concepts: disciplines, types of discourse and national intellectual traditions.

In our view, the main object of the current paper does not rely on dissolving the theoretical differences and epistemological debates, the present paper tried to implement the discourse analysis approach in literary field as an attempt to build a linguistic extensive research.

## **2. Empirical Investigation**

The discourse analysis concept has recorded in the recent years wide spread in the linguistic researches, due to its importance in the modern society as a new pattern to account for the content of discourses in several disciplines. The significance of the concept of discourse analysis does not appear solely in the social content of the speech, but the prime attention provided to the issue in recent years is due to development and building of new tools of analysis and creation of new methodologies and approaches focused on software and technological uses. The content analysis of any discourse should reveal the purpose of the speaker, which could contain an implicit message for the listeners, primarily in the political field. For this reason, the current manuscript provides new framework of analysis as an attempt to examine the validity of the concept of discourse analysis in finding out the structure and the purpose of the speaker, by taking the politics field, especially.

In the empirical investigation related to the issue of discourse analysis, the major challenge is to determine the choice of an appropriate methodology to analyze thoroughly the discourse. In fact, the methodology adopted in the empirical validation should depend primarily on the object of the analysis.

### **2.1. Methodologies of Discourse Analysis**

The review of literature related to the topic of discourse analysis authorized us to identify the presence of two different methods in speech analysis. According to Pécheux, who provided major contribution through defining the discourse analysis concept and developing several methodologies to account for the main object of any speech. In addition to different approaches developed to analyze discourses, Pécheux underlined also the significance of the concept and highlighted the existence of two different methods:

#### **2.1.1. The Content Methodology**

The first approach underlined by the author is focused on analyzing the literary content of the discourse. The author characterizes this methodology as "supralinguistic"<sup>2</sup>, because it attributed major importance to the meaning of the words composing the discourse, the meaning is generally associated with the linguistic structure of the statement raised in the discourse. The importance of the supralinguistic approach in discourse analysis relied on the specific attention allocated to the meaning of discourses in the modern society. The significance of the issue appears obviously in several journals and reviews, by identifying the syntax and the use of some linguistic effects in editing the speech.

The content methodology requires for the interpreter to be familiar with the field in which the discourse is built and know the background of the speaker and the circumstances under which the speech was

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<sup>2</sup> That goes beyond language.

produced, to create an accurate reflection of the content of the discourse and to build reliable analysis of the content.

### 2.1.2. The Scientific Methodology

The second approach focuses on solid scientific bases, also called “scientific”. Pécheux considers the scientific method as infralinguistic, because it relied on identifying a relationship underlining a group of some keywords and ideas. According to the scientific approach, there is solid association between specific words and certain ideas. This analysis focuses on counting the number of occurrences of specific word in a speech or in a text. It means that the speaker or the author is giving prime importance to the concepts and the words repeated in his discourse.

The scientific method remains to be an appropriate approach for analyzing any type of text, because it relied on several fundamentals such as calculating the frequency and number of repetition of some relevant keywords, these principles have contributed in constructing the solid background and the new theory making up the strength of the scientific methodology.

## 2.2. The Discourse Pattern

In the empirical investigation of the present paper, we attempt to analyze the content of two famous novels in the modern literature: the first novel is Virginia Woolf’s famous work *Orlando* and the second novel is Ernest Hemingway’s *Across the river and into the trees*. In the present survey, we attempted to investigate if the authors followed the same writing style to express love in the content of their novels, and to determine the principle stylistic and linguistic differences of Woolf and Hemingway in their narrations. The author applied the analysis using the software Wordstat 6 developed by Provalis Research, it allowed the exploration of the content of any document or media that includes linguistic content.

In the empirical research that we carried out in the present manuscript, we used statistical software to investigate the overall context and language used by the authors to express a specific topic. In this survey, the analysis of the content of the novels relies on rigorous methodology and modern approach. The Study of these novels relies on a particular approach to assess the several notions, it contributed to underline some conclusions. For this reason, we used the approach of the dictionary analysis, which remains the most effective method to investigate and assess the content of any speech or writing.

### 2.2.1. Presentation of the Novels

The first interesting manuscript that will be analyzed in our empirical investigation is considered as the longest and the best love letter in modern literature, it is the famous novel by Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*, considered as reflecting the love story between Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West in reality. The following novel was published in 1928.

The second novel the content of which we attempted to investigate is by Ernest Hemingway, published in 1950 and entitled *Across the river and into the trees*, considered as the result of his first love story, when he was 19 years old.

### 2.2.2. The Analysis of *Orlando*

The preliminary results obtained from investigating the overall content of the Virginia Woolf’s novel, enabled us to infer some interesting conclusions as represented in the following table:

	frequency	% View	% Treatment	% Total	Number of cases	% of cases	TF*IDF
<b>Psychological Process</b>	5991	42%	18.1%	7.5%	1	100%	0.0
<b>Personal Process</b>	3881	27.2%	11.7%	4.9%	1	100%	0.0
<b>Relativity</b>	3752	26.3%	11.3%	4.7%	1	100%	0.0
<b>Linguistic</b>	606	4.2%	1.8%	0.8%	1	100%	0.0
<b>Experimental Dimension</b>	30	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	1	100%	0.0

**Table 1: The preliminary analysis of the content of Virginia Woolf’s novel, *Orlando***

According to the preliminary results, it appears that Woolf relied on psychological and personal process, to express psychiatric thoughts and psychological conflicts of the central character of her novel. The author had not provided major attention for linguistics in her novel, it focuses on the psychological and the personality

of Orlando, the principal character of the novel. The conclusions drawn from the preliminary results remain limited, investigating the content through analyzing in depth the novel authorized us to deduce many interesting findings. We could summarize the results obtained in the following table:

	Frequency	% View	% Treatment	% Total	Number of cases
Psychological Process/ Affective Process	2315	9.5%	5.3%	2.9%	1
Relativity/Present	2058	8.4%	4.7%	2.6%	1
Psychological Process/ Social Process	1645	6.7%	3.8%	2.1%	1
Personal Process/Physical States	1629	6.7%	3.8%	2.0%	1
Relativity/Time	1261	5.2%	2.9%	1.6%	1
Psychological Process/Positive Emotion	1181	4.8%	2.7%	1.5%	1
Psychological Process/Body States	1140	4.7%	2.6%	1.4%	1
Psychological Process/Negative Emotion	1122	4.6%	2.6%	1.4%	1
Psychological Process/Cognitive Process	1008	4.1%	2.3%	1.3%	1
Psychological Process/Humans	791	3.2%	1.8%	1%	1
Psychological Process/Sensory Process	777	3.2%	1.8%	1%	1
Personal Process/Occupation	619	2.5%	1.4%	0.8%	1
Psychological Process/Communication	559	2.3%	1.3%	0.7%	1
Personal Process/Leisure Activity	544	2.2%	1.3%	0.7%	1
Personal Process/Metaphysical	472	1.9%	1.1%	0.6%	1
Relativity/Motion	400	1.6%	0.9%	0.5%	1
Linguistic/Numbers	396	1.6%	0.9%	0.5%	1

Table 2: the results of analyzing in depth the novel "Orlando".

The deep analysis of the content of Virginia Woolf's novel reflected emphasis of the novel on specific characteristics of the principal character of the narrative. The author argued two major aspects Orlando's personality in the novel: the psychological aspect and the personal process of the character. The categorizing of the keywords in the content allowed us to denote that the principal character has known terrible psychological interaction due to changes in his body.

Consulting many pages from Internet about the story, they underlined the psychological interaction of the principal character of the novel, because he was surprised by the sudden change of his gender. The analysis allowed us to deduce that the term "sexuality" appears in the ranking of the keywords as the most used in the narrative with a record of 272 times, confirming the cause of the psychological rupture inside Orlando.

There is another manner to present the major topics discussed in the novel that are presented in the following figure:

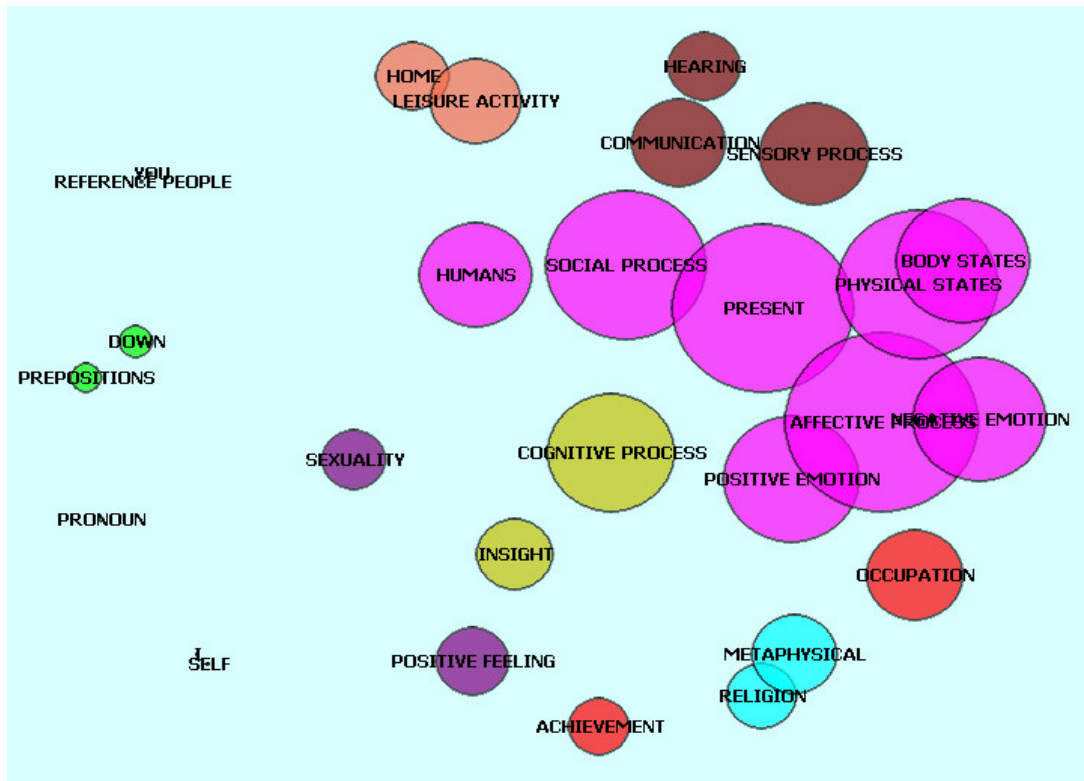


Figure 3: The major notions in Orlando.

The bulk of the aspects of the personality of the principal character of the novel relied on the relationship between “body states” and “emotion”. The content of positive and negative emotions, with the same share in the content of the narrative is not fortunate. The equality between these emotions reflects the major psychological problems occurring in *Orlando*. The mentioned struggle remains the major cause of the relative weak level of positive feeling that seems directly related to sexuality. In fact, Orlando finished by reaching the positive feeling as result of the change of his gender that happened after a week of sleeping.

Also, we could underline the appearance of the term “metaphysical” in the major notions revealed in the content of the novel, it demonstrates that Virginia Woolf has given an in-depth account of the psychological interactions experienced by the main character in the story.

The above figure also helps reveal that occupation and achievement was separated by metaphysical and religious notions in the novel. In fact, we could assume that the author attempted to expose the gender issue in the societal relationships in England. To explain the metaphysical and religious concepts in the novel as considerations, it enabled us to underline the raise of these notions by the English society for gender discrimination in previous ages.

Body states and physical states are virtually sharing significant part in the content of the novel, it enabled us to infer that the two states are primarily associated. The tied relationship between the two notions expresses that physical state has direct effect on the state of the body which remains the major result of gender change of the principal character.

Overall, we could assume that the novel is the summary of the psychological thoughts and concerns experienced by the writer from the remnants of her relationship with her girlfriend Vita Sackville-West. The glaring similarity denoted in the psychological states of the principal character of the narrative and the author, implies that the author has projected the psychological conflicts inside him on the character of Orlando.

**2.2.3. The Analysis of *Across the River and into the Trees***

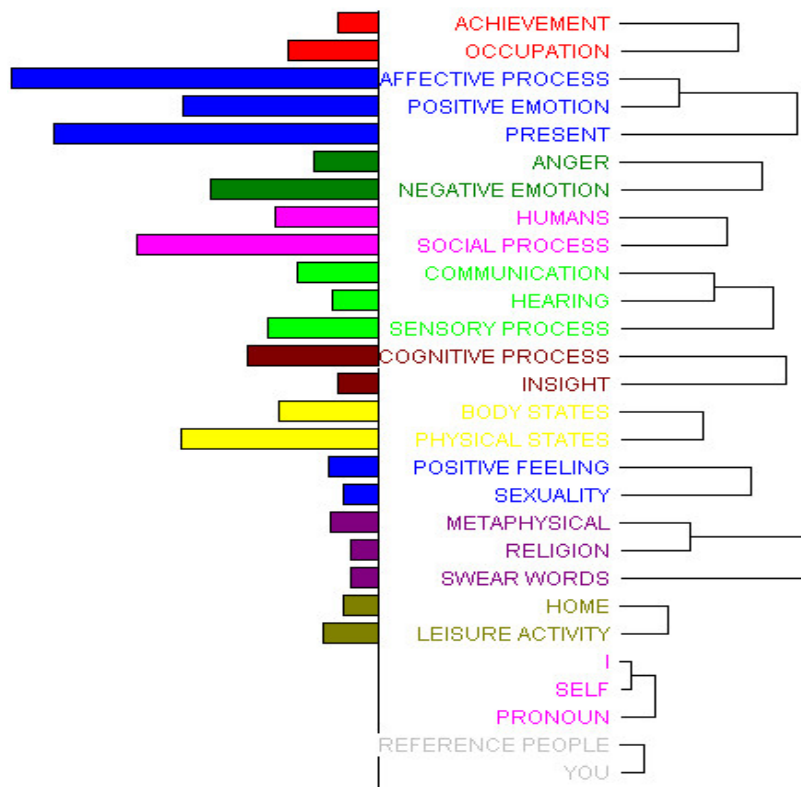
In the first part of the empirical investigation that we conducted, we will attempt to put forward the preliminary results found from analyzing the novel content, which we could summarize in the following table:

	frequency	% View	% treatment	% Total	Number of cases	% of cases
Psychological Process	6167	45.1%	24.9%	9.1%	1	100%
Personal Process	3541	25.9%	14.3%	5.2%	1	100%
Relativity	3424	25%	13.8%	5%	1	100%
Linguistic	357	2.6%	1.4%	0.5%	1	100%
Experimental dimension	191	1.4%	0.8%	0.3%	1	100%

**Table 4: the preliminary results of Hemingway novel**

The preliminary results allowed us to denote that there is similar orientation between the two authors, when Woolf attempted to discuss and to expose the psychological interactions occurring in his principal character. The contribution of the preliminary results to analyze the major notions included in the novel stayed limited. It authorized us to deepen the empirical research to find more accurate deductions compared to the preliminary findings. The detailed results from the in-depth analysis regarding several notions underlined by Ernest Hemingway in his novel shows strange similarities in style between Woolf and Hemingway.

In fact, Hemingway thought that positive feeling is associated with sexuality as the claim raised by Woolf in her novel. Hemingway also dedicated a significant portion of his narrative to exposing the psychological interactions of his characters.



**Figure 5: the major notions analyzed in Hemingway's novel.**

The preliminary observation of the findings led us to infer that the author used much negative emotions than positive terms, due to the troubled state of the principal character of the novel, returning wounded from the

war. The same results point to the fact that Ernest Hemingway remains firmly attached to war in his novel because observing the biography of the author, it underlined that the writer spent several years working as war correspondent.

The author projected his psychological thoughts, due to the circumstances he lived in during his youth and attempted to project what he felt and experienced in the Second World War on his principal character, Colonel Richard. The major content of the narration elaborated by Hemingway relies on exposing the psychological thoughts and emotional conflicts; the principal character is wounded in the war, and find himself falling in love. The conflict between the psychological state of warrior and his need to felllove, creates a particular interaction inside him. The in-depthanalysis of the content of the novel in the empirical investigation of the present paper could be summarized in the figure 6 as follows:

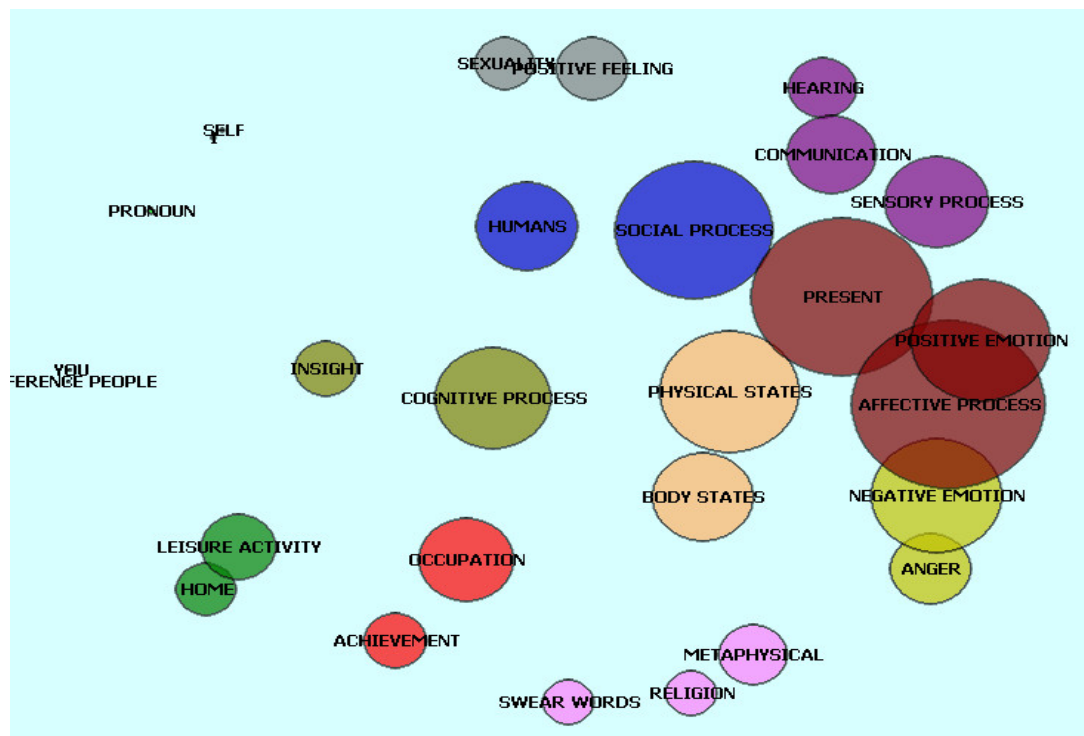


Figure 6: The major notions Ernest Hemingway's novel.

According to figure 6, it appears that the interaction between positive and negative emotions affect significantly the affective process of the facts in the narration. Due to the nature of Colonel Richard's adventure in the novel, anger seems to play acrucial role in affecting the negative emotions of the character, because of risking his life every second in war.

In the novel, the writer also used some keywords related to the communications, according to figure 6. In fact, communication played a crucial role infacilitating the social insertion of any human in the society. Such insertion constituted the major problems for soldiers who experienced the war horrors, and it seems that confronting death everyday represented anobsession notfor Colonel Richard solely, but the author himself when he was soldier in the world war.

Similarly to the analysis of Virginia Woolf's novel, it seems that Hemingway joined physical to body states, expressing the pivotal role of body from psychological perspective. The psychological analysis of the principal character remains a famous style in modern literature as noted in the two novels that make up the foundation forthe empirical research of the present paper.

The writer has also implicitly argued the significance of sexuality in improving the positive feeling of humans; Virginia Woolf raised the same statement in hernovel *Orlando* consolidating the role of sexuality as an outlet for the psychological interactions and obsessions of humans. The finding is consolidated through



several conclusions underlined by several psychotherapists such as Sigmund Freud<sup>3</sup>: the founder of the modern psychoanalysis.

### 3. Conclusion

The present paper is an attempt to provide explanation about modern styles applied to the works of two famous writers in modern Western literature. The empirical investigation relied on rigorous methodology and strong foundations; it ended by bearing out the glaring similarities between the two authors in their novels.

The empirical investigation allowed us to demonstrate that modern literature provides specific attention for psychological interactions of the principal character as an attractive element for readers, although, the psychological obsessions exposed in the novels are in fact the result of the same psychological conflicts inside the authors themselves.

The issue of sexuality also provides an attractive element for readers and remains an omnipresent topic in modern literature, due to the sensitivity of the subject in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to which belong Ernest Hemingway and Virginia Woolf. Recently, several reviewers interested in modern literature of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, raise the statement that the advent of sexuality in modern literature is the direct result of a special phenomenon, called "eroticization of fascism".

The empirical research of the present paper participated in illuminating the similarities in the literary styles applied in modern novels. Although, analyzing several novels of the same authors should provide more evidences regarding the literary style and the notions included in their writings.

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<sup>3</sup>Freud, S. (1997). *Sexuality and the Psychology of Love*.

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