

SYNCHRONIC RECEPTION OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S SELECTED SHORT STORIES (A READER RESPONSE APPROACH)

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ABSTRAK: Penelitian ini, berjudul "Penerimaan Sinkronis Cerita Pendek Pilihan Karya Ernest Hemingway (Pendekatan Resepsi Pembaca)", meneliti interpretasi pembaca kontemporer terhadap karya sastra klasik. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana pembaca masa kini menafsirkan tiga cerita pendek pilihan karya Ernest Hemingway, yaitu "*Hills Like White Elephants*," "*Cat in the Rain*," dan "*A Clean, Well-Lighted Place*". Dengan menggunakan Teori Resepsi Pembaca Hans Robert Jauss, penelitian ini memfokuskan analisis pengaruh cakrawala harapan, aspek estetika maupun non-estetika, dalam membentuk interpretasi subjektif pembaca. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan sinkronis melalui metode kualitatif deskriptif. resepsi sinkronis adalah sebuah pendekatan dalam studi sastra yang menganalisis bagaimana sebuah karya sastra diterima, ditafsirkan, dan diapresiasi oleh pembaca pada periode waktu yang sama. Data dikumpulkan dari 25 mahasiswa semester empat Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Universitas Flores, sebagai responden. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa aspek estetika, khususnya gaya penulisan minimalis dan teknik naratif "*Iceberg Theory*" khas Hemingway, secara efektif menantang pembaca untuk terlibat secara aktif dalam membedah makna tersirat di balik teks yang ringkas. Tema-tema universal yang diangkat, seperti kesepian, dilema moral yang kompleks, dan pencarian cinta, ditemukan tetap relevan dengan realitas kehidupan pembaca modern. Aspek non-estetika yang mencakup latar belakang pengalaman pribadi, kondisi emosional, serta tingkat literasi sastra masing-masing individu, terbukti signifikan dalam membentuk pemahaman unik serta kedalaman apresiasi terhadap teks. Secara keseluruhan, interaksi dinamis antara struktur teks dan latar belakang sosiokultural pembaca menciptakan pengalaman membaca yang mendalam dan bermakna. Hal ini membuktikan bahwa resepsi sastra Hemingway tetap hidup dan terus berkembang secara dinamis di era saat ini, melintasi batas generasi dan waktu.

Kata Kunci: *Resepsi Sinkronis, Respon Pembaca, Cerita Pendek, Estetika, Non-Eстетika*

ABSTRACT: This study, titled "Synchronic Reception of Ernest Hemingway's Selected Short Stories (A Reader Response Approach)," examines the interpretations of contemporary readers regarding classic literary works. The primary objective is to analyze how modern readers interpret three selected short stories by Ernest Hemingway: "*Hills Like White Elephants*," "*Cat in the Rain*," and "*A Clean, Well-Lighted Place*." Utilizing Hans Robert Jauss's Reader-Reception Theory, this study focuses on the influence of the horizon of expectations encompassing both aesthetic and non-aesthetic aspects in shaping subjective interpretations. This study employs a synchronic approach through a descriptive qualitative method, involving 25 fourth-semester students of the English Literature Study Program at the University of Flores as respondents. Synchronic reception is defined as an approach in literary studies that analyzes how a literary work is received, interpreted, and appreciated by readers within the same time period. The results reveal that aesthetic aspects, particularly Hemingway's

minimalist style and the "Iceberg Theory," effectively challenge readers to engage actively in dissecting implied meanings. Universal themes such as profound loneliness, moral dilemmas, and the search for love remain highly relevant to modern readers. Furthermore, non-aesthetic aspects, including personal experiences, emotional conditions, and literary literacy levels, significantly shape the unique understanding and appreciation of the texts. Overall, the dynamic interaction between text structure and the readers' sociocultural backgrounds creates a profound reading experience. This demonstrates that the reception of Hemingway's literature remains alive and continues to evolve dynamically in the current era, transcending the boundaries of generations and time.

Keywords: *Synchronic reception, reader response, short stories, aesthetic, unaesthetic*

INTRODUCTION

Literary works and readers were the building blocks of literary works themselves, because they could not be separated from the social context. Readers were like people who were eating; they were always looking for meaning and good things in the stories they read (Sarwindah, 2020). Literary works gained meaning through the interaction between the text and the reader, as readers brought their own experiences, emotions, and perspectives to their interpretation. This process was influenced by the social and cultural context in which both the text and the reader existed, making each reading experience unique. Just as people savored food differently based on their tastes and preferences, readers extracted different meanings and values from a story based on their personal and societal background.

Literary works served various functions for readers, whether as entertainment, a reflection of life, or a means to understand social and cultural realities (Klarer, 2022). Through stories, readers could experience different perspectives, feel deep emotions, and gain new insights into human life. Additionally, literature acted as a bridge between the past and the present, allowing readers to understand the values and conditions of different eras. Thus, the interaction between readers and texts not only created an aesthetic experience but also shaped a critical understanding of the world around them (Bennet & Royle, 2023). The process of understanding literature occurred through an interpretive activity that involved personal experiences, emotions, and each reader's social context. Readers did not merely receive the meaning conveyed by the text passively; instead, they actively filled in gaps in meaning through association and personal reflection (Booker, 1995). This was what led to the emergence of reception theory, which emphasized the active role of readers in shaping and interpreting the meaning of a literary work, making each interpretation unique and dynamic.

Reception theory, pioneered by Jauss and Iser, highlighted the dynamic relationship between readers and texts (in Kulkarni, 2024). This theory argued that the meaning of a literary work was not fixed but was shaped by the reader's interpretation, which was influenced by their historical, social, and cultural background. Jauss (1982) introduced the concept of the horizon of expectations, which suggested that readers approached a text with preconceived notions based on their past experiences with literature and their societal context. The interpretation of a literary text or genre depended on varying criteria over time, a concept he referred to as the

horizon of expectations. He asserted that “no work was universal,” meaning that a literary piece that resonated with one generation might not hold the same significance for another. Unlike Iser, Jauss took a different approach to Reception Theory, emphasizing the role of historical context in shaping literary interpretation. He also connected literature and society through the horizon of expectations, explaining that “the social function of literature came to light only when the literary experience of the reader entered the horizon of expectation.” Meanwhile, Iser emphasized the reader-response process, where readers actively engaged with the text by filling in gaps and constructing meaning. Through this perspective, a literary work continuously evolved, as different readers in different time periods interpreted it in diverse ways.

One of the most effective ways to examine this phenomenon was through a synchronic reception approach, which focused on how contemporary readers perceived and interpreted a text within their current cultural and social framework. This study applied such an approach to analyze how modern readers engaged with Ernest Hemingway’s short stories, including *Hills Like White Elephants*, *Cat in the Rain*, and *A Clean, Well-Lighted Place*. By exploring how today’s readers responded to these stories, this research aimed to uncover the shifting interpretations and relevance of Hemingway’s works in contemporary literary discourse. Based on this context, this study aims to analyze the synchronic reception of Ernest Hemingway’s selected short stories "Hills Like White Elephants," "Cat in the Rain," and "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" among English Literature students at the University of Flores. Specifically, this study seeks to investigate the influence of both aesthetic and non-aesthetic horizons of expectations on the readers' interpretations and their overall engagement with Hemingway's minimalist literary style.

To further understand the dynamic interaction between readers and texts, this study specifically focused on the synchronic reception of Ernest Hemingway’s short stories. The choice of this topic stemmed from the recognition that Hemingway’s works, though written in the early 20th century, continued to captivate modern readers. By applying the synchronic reception approach, this research intended to explore how contemporary readers interpreted and responded to Hemingway’s stories in today’s social and cultural context. The aim was not only to observe the continued relevance of Hemingway's themes but also to uncover how different generational perspectives shaped their interpretations of his works. This exploration helped to reveal the shifting perceptions and evolving meanings attributed to Hemingway’s stories, reflecting the ways in which literary works interacted with readers from various periods. Thus, the title **Synchronic Reception of Ernest Hemingway’s selected Short Stories (a Reader Response Approach)** reflects the purpose of this study to investigate how present-day readers engaged with Hemingway’s texts and the societal factors influencing these interpretations.

METHODS

This study is a descriptive qualitative study employing the synchronic reception method within the framework of Reader-Response Theory. The primary focus is to investigate the immediate responses of fourth-semester students of the English Literature Study Program at Universitas Flores toward three selected short stories by Ernest Hemingway: "Hills Like White Elephants," "Cat in the Rain," and "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place." Respondents were selected using purposive sampling because they possess the necessary literary foundation to provide critical yet authentic perspectives as contemporary readers. The data collection process was conducted through an expert-validated online questionnaire (Google Forms), consisting of 25 Likert-scale statements covering theme, plot, language style, and narrative technique. Data analysis involved categorizing responses into the dimensions of aesthetic horizons (fulfillment/satisfaction) and non-aesthetic horizons (dissatisfaction or confusion). The quantitative results from response frequencies were further strengthened by a qualitative analysis of the respondents' written reasons to uncover how personal backgrounds and individual expectations shaped their interpretation of Hemingway's minimalist writing style.

RESULT DISCUSSION

Aesthetic Horizon of Expectations

The aesthetic horizon of expectations referred to the framework of understanding that readers possessed regarding a work of art, which was influenced by their prior literary experiences, genre conventions, and cultural background.

Theme

Table 1 Recapitulation of Respondents Answers Regarding the Theme

NO	QUESTIONS	SD	PERCENTAGE	D	PERCENTAGE	N	PERCENTAGE	A	PERCENTAGE	SA	PERCENTAGE	BA	PERCENTAGE
1	The theme of loneliness and loss of meaning in A Clean, Well-Lighted Place is touching and relevant to the lives of modern people	0	0%	1	4%	7	28%	12	48%	5	20%	0	0%
2	Hills Like White Elephants deals with a woman's inner conflict in making big decisions about her pregnancy and the future of her relationship.	0	0%	1	4%	2	8%	18	72%	4	16%	0	0%
3	In Cat in the Rain, the theme of the need for attention and affection in marriage is evident through the character of the wife.	0	0%	1	4%	4	16%	5	20%	14	56%	1	4%
4	All three of Hemingway's short stories deal with human emotional issues that are still very relevant to readers' lives...	1	4%	2	8%	6	24%	10	40%	5	20%	1	4%
5	The themes of human relationships and inner solitude in these stories evoke contemplation of personal life.	1	4%	0	0%	6	24%	13	52%	3	12%	2	8%
6	The conflicts in the stories are easy to understand (e.g. the debate on abortion in Hills Like White Elephants, the emotional abandonment in Cat in the Rain, and the inner turmoil of the old man in A Clean, Well-Lighted Place).	0	0%	1	4%	6	24%	16	64%	1	4%	1	4%

Respondents offered explanations for their perceptions. For theme relevance, one said, "Themes like loneliness and loss still felt close to me, even now in my life." Another commented, "I sometimes felt neutral because the story felt old, not always connecting with me." On emotional reflection, some wrote, "Story made me think hard about life and own feeling," while others stated, "It touched my heart cause I understood struggle inside character." About genre suitability, responses included, "Themes fit well with short story, not too big or

complicated," and "I agreed cause story was simple but full of meaning." On personal resonance, readers noted, "I felt connection when story reminded me my experience," but another said, "Sometimes story did not fit my life so I stayed neutral." Regarding interpretation across backgrounds, one respondent said, "Different people read story same way, cause theme were universal," while another said, "Maybe some culture saw story different but not much." About conflict clarity, responses included, "I understood problem clearly, story was easy to follow," and "Some part was confusing but mostly okay." Overall, these comments confirmed that Hemingway's themes were largely perceived as relevant, emotionally impactful, consistent with genre expectations, and generally clear in conflict presentation, with personal experience and cultural background moderating individual responses.

Readers' perceptions demonstrated that Hemingway's themes in his short stories were widely regarded as relevant and meaningful, particularly in relation to modern human life. His universal themes of struggle, loss, and solitude continued to resonate with readers, fostering emotional and intellectual reflection. The themes aligned well with the expectations of the short story genre, maintaining a balance between familiarity and depth without causing significant surprise or challenge. Personal experiences and cultural backgrounds influenced how deeply readers connected with the themes and interpreted their meanings, but these variations did not drastically alter the overall reception. Additionally, the clarity of conflicts within the stories was generally well understood, contributing to the accessibility of Hemingway's narratives. Overall, Hemingway's thematic elements successfully engaged readers across diverse contexts, confirming his ability to craft stories that were both universally significant and individually impactful.

However, it was important to note that despite the majority's positive response, a minority of readers expressed neutrality or a lesser emotional connection, particularly those who felt the themes seemed 'old' or not always relevant to their current life experience. This indicated diversity in the horizon of expectations influenced by more specific individual factors, sometimes posing challenges in shared meanings of the text.

Plot

Concerning the plot in Hemingway's short stories:

Table 2 Recapitulation of Respondents Answers Regarding the Plot

NO	QUESTIONS	SD	PERCENTAGE	D	PERCENTAGE	N	PERCENTAGE	A	PERCENTAGE	SA	PERCENTAGE	BA	PERCENTAGE
7	The conflict between characters is subtly yet powerfully conveyed, such as the tense conversation between the couple in <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i> .	0	0%	0	0%		0%	20	80%	3	12%	1	4%
8	It is emotionally moving, and the dilemmas faced by protagonists like the women in <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i> can be felt strongly.	0	0%	2	8%	3	12%	16	64%	4	16%	0	0%
9	Hemingway's stories present conflict indirectly, but the meaning is still understood through dialog and atmosphere.	0	0%	2	8%	5	20%	17	68%	1	4%	0	0%
10	Slightly disappointed that some conflicts are not explicitly explained, so it has to be interpreted by myself.	1	4%	13	52%	3	12%	5	20%	2	8%	0	0%
11	The plot feels clear and linear, even though it takes place in a short period of time such as the scene at the station in <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i> .	0	0%	4	16%	1	4%	17	68%	2	8%	1	4%
12	Although there is minimal action, the story remains interesting due to the dialog and small details that powerfully portray the characters' inner conflicts.	0	0%	2	8%	2	8%	17	68%	3	12%	1	4%

Readers generally appreciated Hemingway's narrative style in his short stories, which emphasized subtle conflict and conveyed meaning through dialogue and atmosphere. Most readers responded positively to Hemingway's minimalist approach, presenting interpersonal conflicts in a nuanced yet powerful way, creating a strong emotional connection with the characters and clear, coherent plots despite short timelines. While a small portion of readers desired more explicit conflict explanations, the majority enjoyed the challenge of interpretation. Overall, Hemingway's simple plots, focus on small details, and implicit communication successfully provided an engaging and satisfying reading experience. However, it was necessary to emphasize that a minority of readers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of explicit conflict explanations, which sometime confused them or made them desire clearer narration. This minority critique was important as it showed not all readers fully accepted Hemingway's implicit style, indicating room for approaches to bridge different reader needs without sacrificing artistic integrity.

Language Style

Regarding Hemingway's language style:

Table 3 Recapitulation of Respondents Answers Regarding the Language Style

NO	QUESTIONS	SD	PERCENTAGE	D	PERCENTAGE	N	PERCENTAGE	A	PERCENTAGE	SA	PERCENTAGE	BA	PERCENTAGE
13	The plot develops too slowly, especially in Cat in the Rain, which focuses more on atmosphere and emotions than events.	0	0%	11	44%	4	16%	6	24%	3	12%	0	0%
14	The story is confusing because too much is implied rather than directly explained.	5	20%	12	48%	3	12%	3	12%	2	8%	0	0%
15	The open ending of the story encourages you to interpret your own conclusions.	1	4%	0	0%	4	16%	16	64%	4	16%	0	0%
16	Some stories were unsatisfying as they did not provide a clear resolution or answer to the conflict presented.	1	4%	13	52%	3	12%	6	24%	2	8%	0	0%
17	Hemingway's storytelling style of using short, symbolic dialog effectively conveys hidden messages	0	0%	0	0%	5	20%	17	68%	3	12%	0	0%
18	The language used in the story is quite understandable, although some sentences are implicit.	0	0%	1	4%	2	8%	21	84%	1	4%	0	0%

Respondents offered varied reasons supporting these findings. About the slow pacing, many said, "The slow pace helped me feel better the mood and emotion; it no boring but subtle." Others noted, "Sometimes story felt too slow, I hoped it faster, but I understood focus on feeling more than action." On confusion from implied meanings, respondents commented, "Much not said but clue is there if you pay attention, so I'm not lost," although some mentioned, "I sometimes got lost because expect more direct info." Regarding open endings, many enjoyed, "I liked because ending left space for think myself; it made story more special," while some preferred clearer conclusions: "I wanted finish story with clear answer, ambiguous made feel not enough." On symbolic dialogue, readers said, "Talk simple but deep, made me think a lot," and on language clarity, many felt, "Even sentence not said direct, language clear enough to follow." Overall, these explanations suggested that most readers appreciated Hemingway's subtle, minimalist style, even if a minority experienced challenges with pacing or implicitness. The language style thus successfully balanced simplicity and depth, fitting readers' expectations for nuanced and engaging narratives.

Readers generally appreciated Hemingway's unique language style characterized by subtlety, symbolism, and minimalism. While some readers recognized the deliberate slow pacing, especially in stories like *Cat in the Rain*, most accepted it as a way to evoke mood and emotion rather than cause boredom. Despite the heavy use of implication in his writing, the majority found the stories clear and understandable, reflecting Hemingway's effective use of his "Iceberg Theory." Open endings were largely welcomed for encouraging personal interpretation, though a minority preferred more explicit resolutions. Hemingway's concise, symbolic dialogue was seen as powerful in conveying deeper meanings, and his language was overall considered clear despite its implicit nature. This balance of simplicity and depth aligned well with readers' aesthetic expectations, making Hemingway's language style both engaging and meaningful. Still, a small portion expressed that slow pacing and implicit style sometimes reduced satisfaction or made comprehension challenging, showing limitations in acceptance of Hemingway's language style by some readers.

Narrative Technique

Narrative technique refers to the methods and strategies employed by an author to present a story, such as point of view, narrative structure, pacing, and the use of dialogue and description.

Table 4 Recapitulation of Respondents Answers Regarding the Narrative Technique

NO	QUESTIONS	SD	PERCENTAGE	D	PERCENTAGE	N	PERCENTAGE	A	PERCENTAGE	SA	PERCENTAGE	BA	PERCENTAGE
19	Hemingway's straightforward and concise writing style helps focus on the deep meaning of his words.	0	0%	0	0%	5	20%	16	64%	3	12%	1	4%
20	Some terms or sentences are difficult to understand due to Hemingway's indirect style of explaining situations or characters' emotions.	0	0%	4	16%	6	24%	11	44%	4	16%	0	0%
21	Dialogue between characters feels realistic and reflects complex relationships, such as in the conversation in <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i>	0	0%	0	0%	2	8%	20	80%	3	12%	0	0%
22	These stories are too short and lack narration, making it difficult to understand the emotions and backgrounds of the characters.	2	8%	7	28%	4	16%	8	32%	4	16%	0	0%
23	Some descriptions in the story help to envision the atmosphere, such as the night cafe scene in <i>A Clean, Well-Lighted Place</i> .	0	0%	0	0%	6	24%	14	56%	5	20%	0	0%
24	Additional explanation or narration is needed in the story, as it mostly relies on dialog.	1	4%	6	24%	1	4%	14	56%	3	12%	0	0%

The analysis of readers' responses to Ernest Hemingway's short stories revealed a complex but largely positive engagement with his thematic elements, plot, language style, and narrative techniques, all of which contributed to shaping the aesthetic horizon of expectations. Hemingway's themes of struggle, loss, and solitude resonated as universally relevant, eliciting emotional and intellectual reflection while aligning well with short story conventions; although some readers maintained neutrality due to personal or cultural differences, the clarity of conflicts supported broad accessibility and meaningful reception. His plots were appreciated for their subtle yet powerful conveyance of interpersonal conflict, emotional depth, and coherent structure despite minimal action and compressed timelines, with most readers embracing the interpretive challenge posed by implicit narrative cues.

The unique language style, characterized by deliberate pacing, symbolic dialogue, and layered simplicity, successfully balanced clarity and depth, encouraging reader engagement through implication and open-endedness, though a minority expressed occasional confusion or desire for more explicit resolution. Hemingway's narrative techniques, including his minimalist description, realistic dialogue, and the iceberg theory of writing, were valued for their effectiveness in conveying profound meaning with economy, yet readers' mixed reactions about the sufficiency of contextual detail and emotional clarity highlighted an ongoing tension between subtlety and comprehensibility.

Overall, Hemingway's literary artistry consistently met and occasionally transcended reader expectations by crafting stories that were both widely significant and personally impactful, fostering a dynamic reading experience that challenged, moved, and invited thoughtful interpretation across diverse audiences. This nuanced reception underscored Hemingway's enduring influence and the sophistication of his short story craft in engaging readers' aesthetic horizons through meaningful yet understated storytelling. Minority criticisms calling for more explicit narration and emotional clarity highlighted that some readers found Hemingway's minimalism challenging, emphasizing diversity in reception and the need to consider different reader horizons in literary analysis.

Unaesthetic Horizon of Expectations

Jauss's concept of Unaesthetic Horizon of Expectations posited that literary reception was influenced not only by the structure and aesthetics of the text but also by various external elements originating from the reader.

The Role of Readers' Personal Experience and Emotional Psychological State in Shaping Reception

The questionnaire data clearly highlighted the central role of these two factors in the reception of Hemingway's short stories.

Table 5 Recapitulation of Respondents Answers Regarding the Role of Readers Personal Experience and Emotional Psychological

NO	QUESTIONS	SD	PERCENTAGE	D	PERCENTAGE	N	PERCENTAGE	A	PERCENTAGE	SA	PERCENTAGE	BA	PERCENTAGE
25	These short stories evoke reflections on human life, especially on loneliness, difficult choices, and the need for love.	0	0%	2	8%	6	24%	13	52%	4	16%	0	0%
26	Emotional involvement arises while reading, especially in the silent moments that reflect the character's sadness	0	0%	2	8%	1	4%	13	52%	9	36%	0	0%

Respondents provided insights illustrating these effects. For example, one respondent commented, "I felt the story reminded me about my own loneliness time, so it really touched my heart." Another shared, "Reading about hard choices made me think of my own struggles, it felt very real." Others noted, "Even without many words, I could feel the sadness because I sometimes felt the same sadness too," or, "The quiet parts let me imagine and put my own feelings in, so the story became more personal." Some respondents mentioned,

"When I felt stress or alone, I understood the story better," indicating that their current mood changed how they perceived the text. These responses demonstrated that readers' personal backgrounds and emotional states were essential in forming their aesthetic horizon of expectation. This interplay between the text and the reader's individual context created a rich, affective reading experience, highlighting the importance of both cognitive and emotional engagement in literary reception.

The Determinant Role of Readers' Level of Education and Literary Literacy

The questionnaire results consistently showed that this aspect significantly impacted how respondents engaged with Hemingway's short stories.

Table 6 Recapitulation of Respondents Answers Regarding the Determinant Role of Readers Level of Education and Literary

NO	QUESTIONS	SD	PERCENTAGE	D	PERCENTAGE	N	PERCENTAGE	A	PERCENTAGE	SA	PERCENTAGE	BA	PERCENTAGE
27	Hemingway's stories challenge the understanding of literature as they require the reader to actively interpret the implied meaning.	0	0%	2	8%	2	8%	16	64%	5	20%	0	0%
28	The emotions and conflicts experienced by the characters can be understood, even if they are only conveyed through dialog and small actions.	0	0%	1	4%	3	12%	19	76%	2	8%	0	0%
29	These three short stories are suitable for literary studies because they are rich in meaning and open to various interpretations.	1	4%	0	0%	11	44%	10	40%	2	8%	1	4%
30	These stories raise awareness of literary techniques, especially in recognizing minimalist style and symbolism.	0	0%	1	4%	2	8%	16	64%	5	20%	1	4%

Respondents shared their reasons, often expressing, "I needed to think more because Hemingway did not tell me direct, so I must find meaning myself," and "This kind story made me feel smart when I could understand what behind the words." Others noted, "I could feel what characters feel even if they did not say openly," and, "Reading their talk and small behavior helped me see inside their mind." Some commented, "I thought story had many meaning, so it was good for study," while others said, "I was not sure because I didn't know much about literary study rules." Many also mentioned, "I learned to see how few words can mean much," and, "Story made me realize symbolism was everywhere if I paid attention." In sum, these explanations confirmed that readers' education and literary knowledge substantially shaped their capacity to interpret, appreciate, and learn from Hemingway's literary techniques, aligning with Jauss's theory regarding the determinant role of literary literacy in shaping aesthetic reception.

The analysis showed that the formation of readers' aesthetic horizon toward Hemingway's short stories was influenced by thematic elements, plot, language style, and distinctive narrative techniques. Universal themes such as struggle, loss, and solitude remained relevant and were able to trigger emotional and intellectual reflection, although the degree of personal connection varied among readers. The simple yet strong plots, accompanied by implicit conflict presentation through dialogue and atmosphere, were appreciated because they

allowed readers to actively participate in interpreting the stories. Hemingway's minimalist language style using symbolism and concise dialogue successfully balanced depth and clarity, even though a small portion of readers admitted to having difficulty with the slow pacing and implicit messages. Hemingway's narrative techniques that emphasized minimal description and realistic dialogue effectively created atmosphere and revealed character, yet some readers wanted more explanation to understand the characters' inner thoughts.

Meanwhile, readers' unaesthetic horizon was strongly affected by their personal experiences and psychological states during reading, which strengthened emotional resonance and affective involvement with the stories. Mental states such as loneliness or stress made readers more sensitive to themes of alienation and solitude raised in the stories. Readers' level of education and literary literacy became key factors determining their ability to interpret implied meaning and symbolism, as well as their readiness to face the interpretative challenges posed by Hemingway. Although most readers acknowledged the literary value and potential of the short stories for literary studies, variations in understanding were influenced by academic backgrounds. Overall, the interaction between the text and readers' personal and literary backgrounds shaped a deep and meaningful reading experience, reflecting the complexity and richness of Hemingway's literary reception.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the synchronic reception of Ernest Hemingway's three selected short stories among students at Flores University, focusing on the influence of both aesthetic and non-aesthetic horizons of expectations. The findings reveal that aesthetic aspects comprising universal themes, emotional plot structures, a minimalist "*Iceberg Theory*" style, and concise narrative techniques effectively encourage readers to actively participate in interpreting implied meanings despite the lack of explicit resolutions. Simultaneously, non-aesthetic factors such as personal experiences, psychological conditions, and the readers' level of literary literacy significantly determine the depth of understanding and emotional resonance with the texts. This dynamic interaction between Hemingway's challenging writing style and the individual backgrounds of the readers creates a profound reading experience, proving that Hemingway's classic works remain relevant, capable of enhancing literary literacy, and continue to evolve dynamically within the context of contemporary readers.

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