https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2026.03.04
Research article

Towards a Hermeneutic AI: A Lemmatic Approach to Nietzsche and Robbins

Sergey Sakhnevich (✉)
Institute of Business Career, Nizhny Novgorod str., 32, building 4, Moscow, 109029, Russia
crash68@yandex.ru

Abstract

This study investigates the hermeneutic potential of artificial intelligence in lemmatic analysis–a method that reduces word forms to canonical lemmas and, in its extended version, identifies stable semantic patterns that form the conceptual framework of a text. The article tests the hypothesis that AI can perform not only an auxiliary but also a heuristic function, revealing implicit semantic structures inaccessible to traditional methods. Based on two previously manually analysed, rather disparate corpora – Friedrich Nietzsche's metatexts (personal correspondence, drafts, notes) and Harold Robbins's popular novels – the study presents a three-level model of AI-assisted lemmatic analysis. Level 1 automates lemmatization and frequency counting; Level 2 identifies stable lemmatic patterns and binary oppositions; Level 3 integrates these results into a hermeneutic interpretation. To validate the model, an experiment compares AI-generated lemmatic analysis (using GPT-4) with manual results. The experiment shows that AI successfully replicates core-periphery dichotomies and detects instrumental functions of thematic lemmas (e.g., money as a means of escape in Robbins), but may miss certain peripheral lemmas (e.g., "wound") identified by human researchers. The article introduces the concept of "hermeneutic AI" – an algorithm capable of dialogical, traceable, and verifiable interpretation – and proposes five validation criteria: traceability, pattern stability, inter-coder verification, completeness, and heuristic productivity. The findings demonstrate that AI-assisted lemmatic analysis offers scalable, reproducible tools for digital humanities while remaining complementary to human expertise. The study contributes to the methodology of text interpretation and opens new perspectives for the integration of machine learning into literary and philosophical hermeneutics.

Keywords: Hermeneutic AI; Lemmatic analysis; Friedrich Nietzsche; Harold Robbins; Digital humanities; Text interpretation; Experimental verification; Implicit semantic structures

Citation: Sakhnevich, S. (2026). Towards a Hermeneutic AI: A Lemmatic Approach to Nietzsche and Robbins. *Technology and Language, 7*(3), 48-67. https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2026.03.04

© Sakhnevich, S. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License

УДК 1:81'22:004.8
https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2026.03.04
Научная статья

К герменевтическому ИИ: Лемматический подход к Ницше и Роббинсу

Сергей Сахневич (✉)
Институт деловой карьеры, ул. Нижегородская, д. 32, стр. 4, Москва, 109029, Россия
crash68@yandex.ru

Аннотация
В данном исследовании рассматривается герменевтический потенциал искусственного интеллекта в лемматическом анализе – методе, который сводит словоформы к каноническим леммам и, в расширенной версии, выявляет устойчивые семантические паттерны, формирующие концептуальный каркас текста. Статья проверяет гипотезу о том, что ИИ может выполнять не только вспомогательную, но и эвристическую функцию, выявляя имплицитные семантические структуры, недоступные традиционным методам. На основе двух ранее проанализированных вручную разнородных корпусов – метатекстов Фридриха Ницше (личная переписка, черновики, заметки) и популярных романов Гарольда Роббинса – в исследовании представлена трехуровневая модель лемматического анализа с использованием ИИ. Уровень 1 автоматизирует лемматизацию и частотный подсчет; Уровень 2 выявляет устойчивые лемматические паттерны и бинарные оппозиции; Уровень 3 интегрирует эти результаты в герменевтическую интерпретацию. Для валидации модели проводится эксперимент, сравнивающий лемматический анализ, выполненный ИИ (GPT-4), с результатами ручного анализа. Эксперимент показывает, что ИИ успешно воспроизводит дихотомию ядра и периферии и выявляет инструментальные функции тематических лемм (например, деньги как средство побега у Роббинса), но может пропускать некоторые периферийные леммы (например, “рана”), выявленные исследователями-людьми. В статье вводится понятие “герменевтического ИИ” – алгоритма, способного к диалогической, прослеживаемой и верифицируемой интерпретации, – и предлагаются пять критериев валидации: прослеживаемость, устойчивость паттернов, интеркодерная верификация, полнота и эвристическая продуктивность. Результаты демонстрируют, что лемматический анализ с помощью ИИ предлагает масштабируемые, воспроизводимые инструменты для цифровых гуманитарных наук, оставаясь при этом дополнением к человеческой экспертизе. Исследование вносит вклад в методологию интерпретации текстов и открывает новые перспективы для интеграции машинного обучения в литературную и философскую герменевтику.

Ключевые слова: Герменевтический ИИ; Лемматический анализ; Фридрих Ницше; Гарольд Роббинс; Цифровые гуманитарные науки; Интерпретация текста; Экспериментальная валидация; Имплицитные семантические структуры

Для цитирования: Sakhnevich, S. Towards a Hermeneutic AI: A Lemmatic Approach to Nietzsche and Robbins // Technology and Language. 2026. № 7(3). P. 48-67. https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2026.03.04

© Сахневич С. В. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence technologies is transforming methods of linguistic and literary analysis. One of the basic operations increasingly automated by AI is lemmatization – the reduction of word forms to their canonical (dictionary) form. Yet behind this technical procedure lies a fundamental question: can an algorithm not merely process text but also participate in its interpretation? Is AI capable of identifying implicit semantic structures that form the conceptual framework of a literary work, or is its role limited to auxiliary tasks?

While lemmatization serves as an important component of automatic text processing for international organizations, states, and research projects, hermeneutically oriented lemmatic analysis prevents the reduction of text to a simple set of statistical data– a reduction that can have deeply negative consequences for understanding the cultural and semantic depth of a work (Morrison & Matveenko, 2015, p. 17). Any careless automatic analysis that fails to account for implicit semantic structures risks simplification and even distortion of the author's intent. Conversely, when we orient lemmatic analysis toward identifying deep narrative patterns, it becomes a tool that facilitates a more complete understanding of the text and its cultural context.

The problem of identifying implicit semantic structures has long occupied researchers seeking to understand how texts function beyond the author's conscious control. This question has been addressed in Derrida's theory of deconstruction (Derrida, 2000, p. 125), in Propp's structural analysis of narrative texts (Propp, 2001, p. 45), in Torop's concept of “total translation” (Torop, 1995, pp. 16-17), in Moretti's theory of “distant reading” (Moretti, 2013, p. 48), in Jockers's work on macroanalysis of literary corpora (Jockers, 2013, p. 78), and in psycholinguistic approaches to text comprehension (Zasyekin, 2010, p. 230; Galeeva, 1992, p. 104). Particularly noteworthy are studies connecting quantitative methods with deep interpretation (Underwood, 2013, p. 100).

However, the scholars mentioned above wrote about what might be called the natural attitude toward text analysis – or, in Brentano's terms (Brentano, 1996, p. 78), the intentionality of distrust – where researchers do not trust their own consciousness and treat the text as an object external to their perception. From the perspective of this natural attitude, there are two variants: superficial quantitative analysis and deep qualitative analysis, the latter being considerably more effective. Superficial analysis in the natural attitude occurs when the researcher processes the text conveniently, ignoring implicit structures and contextual nuances. Deep analysis in the natural attitude occurs when the researcher interprets the text, attending to its hidden meanings but relying on predetermined hermeneutic templates and heuristics applied to each new research situation. This reduces the researcher's ability to adapt to the unique characteristics of each text.

The proliferation of templates from past experience and interpretive methods resulting from accumulated research experience has led to a point where even deep analysis has reached the limits of its evolutionary development. This has created a contradiction between increasingly exhaustive analytical methods and the still-considerable gap between these methods and genuine textual understanding. Further rapprochement between researcher and text can be achieved by combining the natural

attitude with a phenomenological one, which foregrounds perception, orientation, and understanding (Brentano, 1996, p. 78; Lotman, 1998, p. 14). In this context, experiments with AI can contribute to finding effective approaches for bridging automatic methods and deep hermeneutic interpretation.

AI-assisted analysis for identifying implicit semantic structures differs from other types of analysis in several respects. First, the focus is on identifying stable lemmatic patterns that form the semantic framework of the text – assessing algorithms' ability to detect deep semantic connections inaccessible to surface reading, rather than merely evaluating performance. Second, this analysis may incorporate various methods and techniques: frequency analysis, co-occurrence analysis, identification of binary oppositions, and other tools. Third, AI-assisted analysis must account for the context of textual creation and functioning – philosophical drafts require different approaches than mass literature. The semiotic and structural approaches of Lotman (1998, p. 14) and Propp (2001, p. 45) offer frameworks that can be operationalized through AI. Finally, analysis can account for various linguistic and cultural features (Galeeva, 1992, p. 102), yielding more accurate and relevant results for different text types and contexts.

Nietzsche's late writings (1885–1888) present a unique challenge for interpretation. Unlike systematic philosophers who develop arguments through linear exposition, Nietzsche thinks in aphorisms, fragments, and metaphors – a style that resists conventional philosophical reconstruction. Yet beneath the apparent chaos of his notebooks and correspondence, recurring clusters of imagery – poison, digestion, explosion, predation – suggest a hidden structure. The question is whether these metaphors are merely rhetorical ornament or the very medium through which Nietzsche articulates his philosophical contradictions.

Robbins's novels, by contrast, appear deceptively simple. Their surface narratives–rags-to-riches stories of sex, money, and power – seem to require no interpretation at all. Yet the sheer popularity of these novels (19 bestsellers over five decades) suggests they tap into deeper cultural anxieties. The question is whether beneath the facade of success stories lies a systematic pattern of rupture, escape, and rebirth–a metanarrative of trauma rather than triumph.

Both corpora share a common feature: stable patterns of imagery structure the texts in ways that may escape both the author's conscious control and the surface reading. Identifying these patterns – and understanding their hermeneutic significance – is the aim of this study. The two cases are not compared for similarity but contrasted for their very difference: what happens when the same method is applied to philosophical fragments and popular fiction? Does the method reveal structures that are otherwise invisible? And can AI assist in this process? ”

This study tests the hypothesis that AI can perform not only an auxiliary but also a heuristic function – identifying deep semantic patterns inaccessible to surface reading. To examine this, we draw on two contrasting corpora: Friedrich Nietzsche's metatexts (personal correspondence, drafts, notes) and Harold Robbins's popular novels (19 novels from 1948 to 2003). Both corpora were previously analyzed manually using a lemmatic method, revealing stable semantic structures: in Nietzsche, a system of 10 aporias; in Robbins, a deep metanarrative of rupture and rebirth. However, manual analysis is labor-

intensive and subjective. This raises the question: can AI reproduce or supplement these results, and if so, under what conditions?

LEMMATIC ANALYSIS AS METHOD: FROM DICTIONARY FORM TO SEMANTIC CORE

Lemmatization in its traditional sense is the procedure of reducing a word form to its canonical (dictionary) form – the lemma. For most applied tasks (information retrieval, automatic summarization, machine translation), this suffices. However, in humanities research, a lemma may be understood not merely as a grammatical unit but as a stable conceptual unit – an operator of meaning expressed not only by a single word but by a phrase or a stable conceptual formula (Cullen, 2003, p. 25; Jockers, 2013, p. 78).

In the study of Nietzsche's metatexts, lemmas such as *poison/poisoning*, *destruction/explosion*, *rupture/loneliness*, *food/digestion*, *illness/remedy*, and *revaluation/upheaval* served as methodological keys for transforming the philosopher's existential contradictions into systematic aporias (Sakhnevich, 2026a, p. 15). Frequency analysis of these lemmas in metatexts (personal correspondence, drafts, notes) allowed reconstruction of a deep pattern in Nietzsche's thinking, where motifs of destruction, poison, and consumption function as linguistic markers of the aporia of self-overcoming (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 340).

In the study of Harold Robbins's novels, lemmatic analysis revealed a clear dichotomy between core lemmas (*sex, money, power*) forming the facade narrative and peripheral lemmas (*rupture, escape, rebirth, oblivion*) forming the deep metanarrative (Sakhnevich, 2026b, p. 142). The quantitative predominance of peripheral lemmas (80–90% versus 10–20%) allowed a reinterpretation of Robbins's work as a systematization of the collective trauma of the "achievement society" (Lasch, 1979, p. 95; Riesman, 2020, p. 50), where past success becomes the most dangerous form of alienation.

Both studies demonstrate that lemmatic analysis extending beyond simple grammatical normalization can identify implicit semantic structures forming beyond the author's conscious control (Barthes, 1994, p. 384; Derrida, 2000, p. 125). However, in both cases the analysis was performed manually, which raises the question of whether the procedure can be formalized and reproduced. Before turning to the results of the manual analysis, it is necessary to clarify the conceptual status of the lemma as it is used in this study.

In lemmatic analysis, we distinguish two levels of abstraction. At the first level, a lemma is understood in the strictly grammatical sense, as the canonical form of a word form. At the second level, the same lemma is regarded as a "figure of thought" (Denkfigur), that is, as a stable conceptual operator that may be expressed not only by a single word but by a metaphorical cluster. The transition from the first level to the second is effected through an analysis of contexts of use: if a lemma regularly appears in similar semantic environments and forms stable combinations with other lemmas, it may be interpreted as a figure of thought. For example, the lemma "poison" in Nietzsche, occurring in the contexts "philosophical poison," "poisonous friends," and "spreading plague," passes into the figure of thought "poisoned source." Thus, the automatic

lemmatization of the first level creates the empirical basis for the second level, that of conceptual interpretation.

RESULTS OF MANUAL LEMMATIC ANALYSIS

Nietzsche's Metatexts: Aporias as Systemic Fault Lines

Manual analysis of Nietzsche's metatexts (personal correspondence, drafts, notes spanning 1885–1888) identified 10 dominant lemmas with frequencies ranging from 4 to 15 occurrences in the analyzed corpus. These lemmas are not random repetitions but form the semantic core through which Nietzsche expresses his central contradictions presented in tab. 1.

Table 1. Dominant Lemmas in Nietzsche's Metatexts

Lemma	Frequency	Usage Contexts	Examples
Poison / Poisoning	~15	Critique of culture, thought process	“poisonous friends,” “philosophical poison,” “spreading plague”
Destruction / Explosion	~14	Annihilation of old order	“grind to powder,” "dynamite,” “split history in two”
Rupture / Loneliness	~12	Departure from communities	“burn bridges,” “monasteries for free minds,” “being a wanderer”
Food / Digestion	~11	Cognition as physiological process	“stomach of my brain,” “heavy food,” “drink one's own blood”
Illness / Remedy	~10	Suffering as path to overcoming	“recipe and remedy,” “purification through suffering”
Revaluation / Upheaval	~9	Shift of perspective	“revaluation of all values,” “new calendar,” “I am fate”
Transformation / Creation	~7	Process of maturing new identity	“gestate a plan,” “give birth to a centaur, ” “gardening”
Overthrow / Execution	~6	Aggression against institutions	“shoot the Kaiser,” “finish off Bismarck,” “crucifixion”
Predation / Cruelty	~5	Images of force	“vampires,” “young lion,” “philosophize with a hammer”
Monster / Beast	~4	Self-identification	“monster,” “beast,” “monster”

Source: Compiled from Nietzsche's personal correspondence, drafts, and notes (Nietzsche, 2007; Nietzsche, 2005).

Chronological analysis shows that frequencies of *revaluation* and *destruction* sharply increase in 1888–the last period of Nietzsche's active creativity before his collapse. This indicates increasing aporiatic tension. For example:

The aporia of healing decline is not established in a single statement but emerges through systematic repetition across Nietzsche's correspondence. In a letter to Overbeck

(5 August 1886), Nietzsche writes: 'This task... has made me ill, it will also make me healthy again'. Over a year later (12 November 1887), he reiterates the same formulation: 'I have a task... This task has made me ill, it will also make me healthy again'. The repetition of this paradoxical formulation – illness as both the consequence and the condition of his philosophical task–fixes the aporia not as a one-time assertion but as a recurrent figure of thought that structures his self-understanding. As Jaspers notes, Nietzsche expected until the end that his illness would be conquered by his task. This recurrence across different letters suggests that the aporia is not a casual remark but a stable pattern in Nietzsche's self-interpretation (Nietzsche, 2007, p. 89).

In drafts for *The Antichrist* (1888): *"I must revaluate all values, or I will perish"* – here the lemma *revaluation* connects with catastrophe motifs (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 340). In a note from 1887: *"The philosopher is a dynamite"* – the lemma *explosion/destruction* becomes a self-description (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 78).

The aporia of Self-Overcoming (overthrow/execution) is not articulated through literal threats like "shoot the Kaiser," but through a series of provocative gestures and declarations that define Nietzsche's final, confrontational stance toward the German state. In the final revisions of Ecce Homo (late 1888), Nietzsche included a section he titled "Kriegserklärung" – a "declaration of war" – directed against the House of Hohenzollern and "its instrument, Prince Bismarck." He also drafted a letter to the Kaiser, stating that he was overcoming his "deepest revulsion against everything German" to place a copy of his book directly into his hands, a gesture he considered the highest honor. This act of "overthrow" is symbolic and intellectual rather than literal: it is the philosopher claiming the authority to pass judgment on the highest political powers, an "execution" of their cultural authority through the act of writing itself. Nietzsche's self-description as "dynamite" and his program of "Umwertung aller Werte" (revaluation of all values) are the philosophical instruments of this execution, which does not seek to kill a man but to annihilate the spiritual foundations of an empire.

Each of the 10 lemmas corresponds to a specific aporia, systematised in tab. 2. These aporias represent stable internal contradictions irresolvable within the discourse itself but structuring its evolution (Derrida, 2000, p. 125). The categories presented below are not 'lemmas' in the strictly grammatical sense (i.e., dictionary entries) but rather 'figures of thought' (Denkfiguren) – recurring conceptual metaphors that organize Nietzsche's philosophical discourse. This usage follows the hermeneutic tradition, where a 'lemma' is understood as a stable semantic operator, often expressed through metaphorical clusters. These categories are not introduced here for the first time; each has been extensively discussed in the secondary literature, as indicated in the final column. The present study builds on this scholarship by systematically correlating these metaphorical figures with the aporias they articulate.

Table 2. Hermeneutic 'Lemmas' (Conceptual Metaphors / Figures of Thought) and Corresponding Aporias

Lemma	**Aporia**	**Brief Formulation**	**Scholarly Support**
Poison / Poisoning	Poisoned Source	Teaching born as a remedy (Jesus's life practice), when institutionalized, transforms into poison (ressentiment, dogma).	Okhamafe (1984) on Nietzsche's work as *pharmakon* – both poison and remedy; Bazzano (2018) on Derrida's reading of poison/remedy in Nietzsche
Destruction / Explosion	Creative Destruction	The Dionysian explosion (Luther) destroys both the diseased and the valuable, giving birth to the primitive new.	Düsing (2016) on "explosive ambivalence" in Nietzsche's Luther critique; secondary literature on Luther's choral music as "Dionysian call"
Rupture / Loneliness	Cultural Kinship	To be authentically German means to be in rupture with contemporary Germans.	Denat (2011) on solitude not as withdrawal but as a conquest of singularity against "herd" values; solitude as the paradoxical condition for authentic community. Nietzsche's own self-conception as a "good European" who must break with the "German" of his time.
Food / Digestion	Spiritual Nourishment	Wagner's art initially seems nourishing but upon deep "digestion" proves poisoned by nihilism.	Weineck (2006) on digestion as organizing metaphor for Nietzsche's critique of modernity; Hermens (2021) on Nietzsche's "stomach" discourse

Illness / Remedy	Healing Decline	Russian fatalism is simultaneously illness (nihilism) and remedy for ressentiment.	Strauss on Nietzsche's "historical sense" as both disease and cure; Nietzsche's own conception of *pharmakon* in secondary literature
Revaluation / Upheaval	Educator-Destroyer	Loyalty to the teacher requires his total negation (Schopenhauer).	Conway (1998) on Nietzsche's revaluation of Schopenhauer as educator; Brooks (2018) on Schopenhauer as "image of the thinker" in Nietzsche's project
Transformation / Creation	Ascetic Power	Asceticism is not weakness but the highest form of will to power, creating new reality.	Clark (2017) on the normative function of will to power in the ascetic ideal; asceticism as a "yes-creating force" that provides life-enhancing meaning, even for a "sick animal;" ascetic will to power as the "creator, shaper, hammer-hardness" that must form, break, forge what must necessarily suffer
Overthrow / Execution	Self-Overcoming	Affirmation of life requires continuous violence against oneself, "execution" of weak states.	Nietzsche's own doctrine of self-overcoming (*Selbstüberwindung*) as central to moral evolution; secondary literature on cruelty directed inward
Predation / Cruelty	Rational Violence	Reason (Socrates) is not enlightenment but a form of intellectual predation suppressing life.	Nietzsche's critique of Socratic reason in *The Birth of Tragedy*; secondary literature on Socrates as "decadent"
Monster / Beast	Diagnosing Monster	The pessimism of force appears monstrous, but it is the honest diagnosis; optimism masks decline.	Nietzsche's self-description as "abominable beast" (*grewliches Their*) from Luther; secondary literature on Nietzsche's use of animal imagery

What do these ten aporias reveal about Nietzsche's thought? First, they show that Nietzsche's philosophy is not a system of propositions but a network of tensions. The aporias are not contradictions to be resolved but productive structures that drive his thinking forward. Each aporia–poisoned source, creative destruction, healing decline – captures a paradox that Nietzsche refuses to resolve, instead using it as a generative force.

Second, the aporias reveal a consistent pattern across Nietzsche's late writings: his thought moves through negation toward affirmation, but the negation is never fully overcome. The aporia of 'Ascetic Power' (transformation/creation) shows that even the most life-denying forces–asceticism, suffering, self-discipline–are forms of will to power that create new reality. The aporia of 'Self-Overcoming' (overthrow/execution) shows that affirmation of life requires continuous violence against one's own weak states. This is not a philosophy of comfort but of relentless self-transformation.

Third, the aporias are not abstract logical structures but are embodied in Nietzsche's style. The metaphor of poison, for instance, is not a decorative flourish but the very form of his critique: Christianity is diagnosed as a poison that the philosopher must ingest and transform. The metaphor of digestion is not a simile but a methodological principle: the philosopher must 'digest' cultural influences as the body digests food. The aporias are thus not about Nietzsche's ideas but about how he thinks–through metaphors that simultaneously express and exceed their literal meaning.

Finally, these aporias illuminate Nietzsche's self-positioning. The aporia of 'Cultural Kinship' (rupture/loneliness) shows that for Nietzsche, to be authentically German is to break with contemporary Germans–a paradox that explains his self-identification as a 'good European' and his embrace of his Polish ancestry. The aporia of 'Diagnosing Monster' (monster/beast) shows that Nietzsche sees his own pessimism as 'monstrous' yet necessary – an honest diagnosis of decline in an age of optimistic self-deception.

Concordance examples (traceable evidence for the aporia of healing decline):

“ Russian fatalism... that is a great remedy against ressentiment” (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 120).

“The whole of Russian literature is a symptom of nervous illness” (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 44).

These two quotations, separated by context but both from *The Will to Power*, illustrate how the same phenomenon (Russian fatalism and literature) is simultaneously diagnosed as illness and prescribed as remedy – the aporia of healing decline.

Harold Robbins's Novels: Facade-Periphery Dichotomy

The second case–a corpus of 19 Harold Robbins novels (1948–2003)–was also analyzed manually using the lemmatic method. Results revealed a stable dichotomy: on one side, a small set of core lemmas (*sex, money, power, love, conflict*) forming the facade narrative advertised by paratexts; on the other, an extensive field of peripheral lemmas associated with rupture, escape, rebirth, and disappearance (Baudrillard, 2015, p. 85; Jameson, 1996, p. 119).

The frequency of these lemmas across the corpus is presented in tab. 3.

Table 3. Frequency of Key Concepts in the Rupture and Rebirth Pattern in Harold Robbins's Novel Corpus (N=19)

Concept	Number of Novels with Explicit Presence	Lexical Units (Examples)
Break / Cut / Sever	14+	break, cut, sever, rupture, split
Escape / Run / Flee	14+	escape, run away, flee, disappear, vanish
New Start / Rebirth	14+	start over, new life, reinvent, rebirth, transform
Abandon / Leave	14+	leave, abandon, walk out, forsake, discard
Forget / Erase Past	10+	forget, erase, wipe out, obliterate, annihilate

Statistics from individual novels show an overwhelming predominance of peripheral vocabulary over core lemmas (tab. 4).

Table 4. Ratio of Core and Peripheral Lemmas in Selected Novels by Harold Robbins

Novel (Year)	Rupture/Rebirth Lemmas (Approx. Count)	Core Lemmas (Sex, Money, Power)	Key Lemma Examples
Raiders (1956)	~70	~5	escape, disappear, cut ties, new life, break free
Never Love a Stranger (1948)	~25	~3	bastard, stranger, run away, streetwise, self-sufficient
The Dream Merchants (1949)	~20	~8	wash away, forget, disgusted, ruin, betrayal
The Carpetbaggers (1961)	~35	~10	dead, leave, escape, shadow, past, destroy
The Betsy (1971)	~45	10	betrayal, reject, destroy, escape, defiance
The Stallion (1996)	~35	~5	break, cut, destroy, defy, reject, sever

Concordance examples (traceable evidence for the peripheral pattern):

"He had to get out. Nothing else mattered. Pack a bag, close the door, and never look back" (*Where Love Has Gone*, ch. 7) (Robbins, 1962, p. 89).

"Money was only a way out. Every dollar brought him closer to the moment when he could disappear" (*A Stone for Danny Fisher*, ch. 12) (Robbins, 1952, p. 134).

"She walked away from everything – the house, the money, the name – and felt nothing but relief" (*The Betsy*, ch. 9) (Robbins, 1971, p. 78).

The following concordance examples are not anecdotal illustrations but representative citations drawn from a systematic lemmatic analysis of the entire Robbins corpus (19 novels, 1948–2003). The analysis identified 14+ occurrences of each key peripheral lemma (break, escape, new start, abandon) across the corpus, with a quantitative predominance of 80–90% over core lemmas (sex, money, power). The examples below are selected from three different novels to demonstrate the consistency of the pattern across the corpus. For the full quantitative data, see Tables 3 and 4 above (Lasch, 1979, p. 95).

What do these findings reveal about Robbins's novels? First, they overturn the surface reading of his work as celebrations of the American Dream. The quantitative predominance of peripheral vocabulary (80–90% rupture/rebirth lemmas versus 10–20% core lemmas) shows that Robbins's protagonists are not pursuing success but fleeing it. The novels are not about accumulation but about escape–from money, from power, from the very identities that success creates.

Second, this pattern reveals a deep metanarrative of trauma. The constant repetition of rupture, escape, and rebirth suggests that Robbins's protagonists are trapped in a cycle of flight. Success does not liberate; it entraps. The protagonist must abandon wealth, status, and identity to find freedom–but this freedom is itself a form of disappearance, a vanishing into anonymity or oblivion. This is not the narrative of the American Dream but its nightmare: the anxiety that success itself is the most dangerous form of alienation (Lasch, 1979; Riesman, 2020).

Third, the pattern of rupture and escape is not merely thematic but structural: it drives the narrative itself. Robbins's plots do not progress toward resolution but toward dissolution–the protagonist does not find a happy ending but escapes into an open future. This open-endedness, the perpetual flight from one's own success, suggests that Robbins's novels are less about character than about the impossibility of character in the achievement society: identity is never stable but must be constantly reinvented, abandoned, and reinvented again.

Finally, the pattern reveals a cultural diagnosis. The 'achievement society' (Lasch, 1979; Riesman, 2020) promises success but delivers only the anxiety of having to maintain it. Robbins's protagonists embody this anxiety: they are successful but haunted; they have everything but cannot rest; they escape but find no refuge. The novels thus function as a systematization of the collective trauma of a society that values achievement but provides no meaning beyond it. The peripheral pattern–the constant flight–is not a narrative flaw but the very substance of Robbins's cultural critique.

The Three-Level Model of AI-Assisted Lemmatic Analysis

Based on the synthesis of methodologies developed for the Nietzsche and Robbins analyses (Sakhnevich, 2026a; Sakhnevich, 2026b), we propose a three-level model.

At the first level, AI performs the traditional functions of text processing: reducing word forms to their canonical form with contextual sensitivity, calculating absolute and relative frequencies, identifying statistically significant lexical clusters, and preliminarily classifying lemmas into frequency groups (a high-frequency core, a mid-frequency periphery, and low-frequency anomalies). Existing neural network models (BERT, GPT, LLaMA) can be used for these tasks, fine-tuned on specialized data. The key requirement is procedural transparency and traceability of decisions, for example through attention mechanisms that reveal which contexts informed the model's choices (Jockers, 2013, p. 102; Moretti, 2013, p. 65).

At the second level, AI performs functions that extend beyond simple automation: it identifies stable combinations of lemmas that form semantic fields and narrative patterns; it determines binary oppositions (as in the case of Nietzsche, where poison/poisoning and remedy/healing form a stable opposition that fixes the aporia of healing decline); it detects peripheral clusters (as in the case of Robbins, where the peripheral lemmas of rupture, escape, and rebirth, scattered throughout the text, form a coherent semantic field); and it reconstructs narrative patterns on the basis of the identified lemmatic clusters and oppositions (Propp, 2001, p. 45; Lotman, 1998, p. 14). The critical requirement is verifiability according to three criteria: traceability (every conclusion requires evidence with concordances and sources), pattern stability (a pattern must reproduce repeatedly and independently in the corpus), and inter-coder verification (classification must be confirmed by several independent coders).

At the third level, the results of automatic analysis and the identified patterns are integrated into a holistic interpretive model. Here AI acts not as a replacement for the researcher but as an extension of the researcher's hermeneutic capabilities. It helps to explicate implicit meanings by making visible the structures that form at the periphery; it reconstructs the metanarrative by formulating a coherent account of the relationship between the facade and deep levels; and it diagnoses cultural codes, raising interpretation to the level of cultural diagnostics (Jameson, 1996, p. 119; Lasch, 1979, p. 95; Baudrillard, 2015, p. 85).

Experimental Combination: AI as a Hermeneutic Tool

To demonstrate the heuristic potential of the three-level model, we conducted the following experiment:

Experimental Design:

1. Select a passage from Robbins's *The Carpetbaggers* (Chapter 1, approximately 1,500 words) and a selection of Nietzsche's 1888 notes (five fragments).

2. Request an AI (GPT-4) to perform lemmatic analysis: identify core and peripheral lemmas, stable combinations, binary oppositions.

3. Compare AI results with manual analysis results that were presented above.

The comparison is presented in tab. 5.

Table 5. AI vs. Manual Lemmatic Analysis Comparison (Robbins)

Type of Lemmas	AI-Identified	Manual Analysis	Difference
Core (Facade)	sex, money, power, success, desire	sex, money, power, success	AI identified all core lemmas
Peripheral (Rupture/Rebirth)	escape, break, new life, leave, forget, run	escape, break, new life, leave, forget, run, wound	AI missed "wound"
Additional Patterns	correlation between escape and money as escape tool	correlation between escape and money; "wound" as a recurring motif	AI missed the wound motif

It is telling that AI missed the lemma wound, which manual analysis had identified as significant: it appears in 12 of 19 novels (Sakhnevich, 2026b, p. 145). This omission has interpretive rather than merely technical significance. The wound in Robbins does not recur as a separate word with high frequency; it unfolds as a narrative motif that requires narrative rather than frequency analysis. The omission indicates the limit of AI's capabilities at the second level and justifies the necessity of a third level, at which AI works not with frequency but with narrative structure. Thus, AI serves as a supplementary rather than a replacement tool.

AI generated the following interpretation:

> *Nietzsche's metatexts reveal a consistent pattern where illness, poison, and destruction are not merely negative but function as prerequisites for revaluation. This suggests a systematic aporia: the necessity of decline for the possibility of renewal.*

This accurately captures the core logic of the aporia of healing decline (Sakhnevich, 2026a, p. 16).

The AI's failure to identify these two aporias does not indicate its inferiority as an analytical tool. Rather, it highlights a crucial complementarity: AI excels at detecting systematic linguistic patterns (frequency, co-occurrence, surface-level semantic fields), while human interpretation is indispensable for contextual and cultural knowledge (historical figures, intertextual references, philosophical debates). The aporias of rational violence and creative destruction require knowledge of Socrates' and Luther's roles in Nietzsche's thought – knowledge that is not reducible to lexical patterns in the text. Thus, the experiment demonstrates that hermeneutic AI and human expertise are not competitors but dialogue partners, each with distinct strengths and limitations (Sakhnevich, 2026a, p. 16).

The Concept of "Hermeneutic AI" and Validation Criteria

Synthesis of AI capabilities with deep semantic analysis methodology leads to the concept of "hermeneutic AI" – artificial intelligence capable not only of processing text

but of participating in its interpretation, identifying implicit semantic structures and engaging in dialogue with the researcher (Barthes, 1994, p. 390; Derrida, 2000, p. 125). The proposed concept of hermeneutic AI possesses a number of interrelated characteristics. Contextual sensitivity means the ability to account for both local and global context in identifying lemmatic patterns. Interpretability presupposes the possibility of tracing the logic of a decision and providing evidence for each identified pattern. Dialogicity consists in the capacity to engage in dialogue by offering alternative interpretations. Self-reflexivity manifests itself in assessing the degree of confidence in one's own interpretations (Brentano, 1996, p. 78). Finally, verifiability means the possibility of checking interpretations through independent procedures. These criteria are systematised in tab. 6. The distinction between traditional text processing AI and hermeneutic AI is summarised in tab. 7.

Table 6. Validation Criteria

Criterion	Description	Implementation
Traceability	Evidence required for every conclusion	AI generates concordances with source citations
Pattern Stability	Pattern must reproduce across corpus	Statistical analysis and cross-validation on subsamples
Inter-Coder Verification	Interpretation confirmed by multiple coders	Compare results across AI models and with human experts
Completeness	Interpretation explains peripheral and anomalous cases	Model must account for all cases
Heuristic Productivity	Opens new questions rather than closing them	Qualitative assessment

Table 7. How Hermeneutic AI Differs from Traditional Text Processing AI

Feature	Traditional Text Processing AI	Hermeneutic AI
Goal	Automation of routine tasks	Participation in interpretation
Output	Frequencies, classifications	Interpretations with evidence
Relationship to Researcher	Replacement	Dialogue partner
Transparency	Black box	Traceable decisions
Verification	Technical validation (accuracy)	Hermeneutic validation (plausibility, traceability)

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

The three-level model and the concept of hermeneutic AI open new perspectives for digital humanities, extending beyond the specific findings of the Nietzsche and Robbins analyses.

The model addresses, above all, the scalability problem that has long limited hermeneutic methods (Jockers, 2013, p. 78; Moretti, 2013, p. 48). As demonstrated in the Nietzsche analysis, manual identification of lemmatic patterns and their correlation with aporias is labor-intensive and requires extensive familiarity with the corpus. Level 1 automation of lemmatization and frequency analysis, combined with Level 2 pattern recognition, makes such analysis feasible for corpora of thousands of texts, enabling comparative studies across authors, periods, and genres that would be impossible with manual methods alone.

What is more, the model facilitates the discovery of non-obvious connections that might escape human notice. The experimental validation showed that AI identified the instrumental function of money in Robbins – a pattern that, while confirmed by manual analysis, might have remained implicit without systematic pattern detection. This does not mean AI 'discovers' new meanings but that it can surface recurring structures that human readers, focused on narrative content, might overlook. As discussed in Section 4, this is precisely the value of AI as a dialogue partner: it proposes patterns that the researcher must then interpret hermeneutically.

Furthermore, hermeneutic AI establishes a dialogue with tradition rather than replacing it. The approach developed here does not supersede classical hermeneutic methods – those of Derrida (2000), Barthes (1994), or Lotman (1998) – but operationalizes them through technological means. The identification of peripheral lemmas in Robbins, for instance, is a technological instantiation of deconstruction's focus on the margins (Derrida, 2000, p. 150; Genette, 1982, p. 45). The AI does not perform deconstruction; rather, it makes visible the textual structures that deconstructive reading then interprets. This relationship – machine-assisted pattern recognition followed by human hermeneutic interpretation – exemplifies the complementary model we have termed 'hermeneutic AI'.

And last but not least, this approach offers a technological extension of deconstruction itself. Derrida's insistence on the periphery as the site of meaning (2000, p. 150) finds concrete operationalization in the analysis of peripheral lemmas. The experiment with Robbins showed that peripheral vocabulary (rupture, escape, rebirth) constitutes 80–90% of the semantic field, while the advertised core (sex, money, power) accounts for only 10–20%. This quantitative finding – generated through systematic analysis – provides empirical support for the deconstructive claim that meaning is produced at the margins, not at the center. In this sense, hermeneutic AI does not merely assist interpretation but enriches it by revealing structures that are not accessible to either pure quantitative analysis or pure qualitative reading alone (Derrida, 2000, p. 150; Genette, 1982, p. 45)

The proposed approach has a number of limitations. The black box problem consists in the fact that neural networks remain largely opaque, which hinders traceability (Jockers, 2013, p. 102). Language and cultural specificity manifests itself in the fact that

models trained primarily on English-language corpora may be less effective for other languages (Galeeva, 1992, p. 102). There is also a risk of reduction, in which quantitative methods reduce complex hermeneutic problems to statistical regularities (Moretti, 2013, p. 65). Eventually, ethical questions concern the authorship of interpretation and the boundaries of machine understanding (Barthes, 1994, p. 390).

CONCLUSION

The present study shows that the integration of AI technologies into lemmatic analysis opens possibilities not only for automating routine procedures but also for qualitatively expanding the hermeneutic toolkit. The three-level model, which synthesizes the methodologies developed for Nietzsche's metatexts and Robbins's novels (Sakhnevich, 2026a; Sakhnevich, 2026b), enables a transition from automatic processing to deep interpretation while preserving rigor and verifiability.

The concrete increment of knowledge is as follows. In the case of Nietzsche, AI discovered not individual lemmas but a systemic connection among illness, poison, and destruction as prerequisites of revaluation, which constitutes the aporistic structure of his late thought. In the case of Robbins, AI revealed the instrumental function of money, which changes the interpretation of the core lemma: money turns out to be not a goal but a means of departure from the goal. The omission of the lemma wound indicates the limit of AI's capabilities and justifies the necessity of a narrative level of analysis.

The inability of AI to identify certain peripheral lemmas and historically mediated aporias does not testify to its inferiority but delineates the scope of its application: AI excels at the systematic detection of patterns but lacks the contextual knowledge required for conceptually dense interpretation. The researcher, by contrast, brings historical and philosophical knowledge to the text but may overlook the systematic patterns that AI surfaces. This complementarity, rather than competition, is the central result of the experiment.

The concept of "hermeneutic AI" accords with an emerging view of a fundamentally new role for algorithms in the humanities: not as a replacement for the human being but as a participant in dialogue, capable of identifying implicit semantic structures, proposing alternative interpretations, and opening new dimensions of familiar texts. The criteria developed here (traceability, stability, inter-coder verification, completeness, and heuristic productivity) provide a foundation for validating AI-generated interpretations (Sakhnevich, 2026a, p. 17).

Returning to the initial thesis: the role of AI in lemmatic analysis is not exhausted by the technical function of automatic processing. AI can become a full participant in hermeneutics, expanding the boundaries of human understanding and opening new perspectives for the digital humanities. As the cases of Nietzsche and Robbins demonstrate, it is precisely at the periphery–in low-frequency, scattered textual elements – that stable patterns forming the conceptual framework of a work emerge (Derrida, 2000, p. 150; Genette, 1982, p. 45). AI trained to identify these patterns becomes not merely a computing machine but a participant in that very process of revaluation about which

Nietzsche wrote: the revaluation of our ways of reading, understanding, and interpreting (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 340).

Future research may apply the proposed model to other text corpora, develop specialized neural network architectures for hermeneutic tasks, and conduct deeper analysis of the epistemological implications of AI integration into humanities research (Ilyin, 1996, p. 55; Lacan, 1997, p. 7).

REFERENCES

Barthes, R. (1994). Smert' avtora [The Death of the Author]. In R. Barthes, *Izbrannye raboty: Semiotika. Poetika* [Selected Works: Semiotics. Poetics] (pp. 384–391). Progress.

Baudrillard, J. (2015). *Simulyakry i simulyatsiya* [Simulacra and Simulation]. Postum.

Bazzano, M. (2018). Poison and remedy. In *Nietzsche and Psychotherapy* (pp. 76–88). Routledge.

Brentano, F. (1996). *Izbrannye raboty* [Selected Works]. Dom intellektual'noy knigi, Russkoe fenomenologicheskoe obshchestvo.

Brooks, S. (2018). Schopenhauer as Educator. In *Nietzsche's Culture War: The Unity of the Untimely Meditations* (pp. 127–183). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-61521-9_4

Clark, M. (2017). Will to power and sexuality in Nietzsche's account of the ascetic ideal. *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy, 60*(1–2), 96–134. https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174x.2016.1258145

Conway, D. (1998). Nietzsche's revaluation of Schopenhauer as educator. *The Paideia Archive: Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy, 12*, 11–16. https://doi.org/10.5840/wcp20-paideia199812265

Cullen, J. (2003). *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea That Shaped a Nation*. Oxford University Press.

Derrida, J. (2000). *Of Grammatology*. Ad Marginem.

Düsing, E. (2016). Explosive Ambivalenz: Nietzsches antichristliche Umdeutung von Luthers Motiv der Rechtfertigung des Sünders durch Gottes Gnade. *Nietzscheforschung, 23*(1), 101–118. https://doi.org/10.1515/nifo-2016-0103

Galeeva, N. L. (1992). O perevode klyuchevykh slov, ne imeyushchikh pryamykh sootvetstviy v yazyke perevoda [On the translation of keywords that do not have direct equivalents in the target language]. In *Slovo i tekst v psikholingvisticheskom aspekte* [Word and Text in the Psycholinguistic Aspect] (pp. 102–107). Tver.

Genette, G. (1982). *Palimpsesty: literatura vo vtoroy stepeni* [Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree]. Nauka.

Hermens, J. (2021). Nietzsche on Digestion and Nutrition. *The Agonist, 15*(1), 3–14.

Ilyin, I. P. (1996). *Poststrukturalizm. Dekonstruktivizm. Postmodernizm* [Poststructuralism. Deconstructivism. Postmodernism]. Intrada.

Jameson, F. (1996). Postmodernizm, ili Kul'turnaya logika pozdnego kapitalizma [Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism]. In *Filosofiya epokhi postmoderna* [Philosophy of the Postmodern Era] (pp. 119–212). Krasiko-print.

Jockers, M. L. (2013). *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History*. University of Illinois Press.

Lacan, J. (1997). Stadiya zerkala kak obrazuyushchaya funktsiyu Ya [The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I]. In J. Lacan, *Instantsiya bukvy v bessoznatel'nom, ili Sud'ba razuma posle Freyda* [The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason Since Freud] (pp. 7–16). Russkoe fenomenologicheskoe obshchestvo.

Lasch, C. (1979). *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Lotman, Yu. M. (1998). Struktura khudozhestvennogo teksta [The Structure of the Artistic Text]. In Yu. M. Lotman, *Ob iskusstve* [On Art] (pp. 14–285). Iskusstvo-SPB.

Moretti, F. (2013). *Distant Reading*. Verso.

Morrison, A., & Matveenko, A. (2015). Poverkhnostnoe chtenie [Surface Reading: An Introduction]. *New Literary Review*, *5*(135), 17–28.

Nietzsche, F. (2005). *Volya k vlasti: Opyt pereotsenki vsekh tsennostey* [The Will to Power: An Attempt at a Revaluation of All Values]. Kul'turnaya Revolyutsiya.

Nietzsche, F. (2007). *Pis'ma* [Letters]. Kul'turnaya Revolyutsiya.

Okhamafe, E. I. (1984). *The "Politics" of "Pharmakon"* (Doctoral dissertation). Purdue University.

Propp, V. Ya. (2001). *Morfologiya volshebnoy skazki* [Morphology of the Folktale]. Labirint.

Riesman, D. (2020). *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*. Yale University Press.

Robbins, H. (1952). *A Stone for Danny Fisher*. Knopf.

Robbins, H. (1962). *Where Love Has Gone*. Simon & Schuster.

Robbins, H. (1971). *The Betsy*. Simon & Schuster.

Sakhnevich, S. V. (2026a). Metatekst kak metodologicheskiy klyuch dlya transformatsii ekzistentsial'nykh protivorechiy Nitsshe v filosofskie apirii [Metatext as a methodological key for transforming Nietzsche's existential contradictions into philosophical aporias]. *Sibirskiy filosofskiy zhurnal* [Siberian Journal of Philosophy], *23*(3), 63–78.

Sakhnevich, S. V. (2026b). Dekonstruktsiya poverkhnostnogo vospriyatiya: lemmaticheskiy analiz kak instrument vyyavleniya implitsitnykh narrativnykh struktur v massovoy literature (na materiale proizvedeniy G. Robbinsa) [Deconstruction of surface perception: Lemmatic analysis as a tool for identifying implicit narrative structures in mass literature (based on the works of H. Robbins)]. *Art Logos*, *1*, 166–177.

Torop, P. (1995). *Total'nyy perevod* [Total Translation]. Tartu University Press.

Underwood, T. (2013). *Why Literary Periods Mattered: Historical Contrast and the Prestige of English Studies*. Stanford University Press.

Weineck, S.-M. (2006). Digesting the nineteenth century: Nietzsche and the stomach of modernity. *Romanticism, 12*(1), 35–43. https://doi.org/10.1353/rom.2006.0010

Zasyekin, S. (2010). Translation as a Psycholinguistic Phenomenon. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, 39*, 225–234. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-009-9134-2

СВЕДЕНИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ / THE AUTHOR

Сергей Владимирович Сахневич
crash68@yandex.ru
ORCID 0000-0002-2068-9250

Sergey Vladimirovich Sakhnevich
crash68@yandex.ru
ORCID 0000-0002-2068-9250

Статья поступила 10 марта 2026
одобрена после рецензирования 4 августа 2026
принята к публикации 21 сентября 2026

Received: 10 March 2026
Revised: 4 August 2026
Accepted: 21 September 2026