

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

FACULTAD DE INGLÉS



TRABAJO FINAL DE GRADUACIÓN PARA OPTAR POR EL GRADO DE
BACHILLERATO EN INGLÉS

Título de la investigación

Literary Analysis of *El Arte de Amar* by Erich Fromm Through a Psychological
Approach

Nombre de la estudiante

Clarissa Paola Quirós Prado

Tutor:

Catalina Guerrero Troyo

Sede

San José

Mes, Año

Octubre 2025

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank everyone who helped me in one way or another during the thesis process. First, I want to express my gratitude to my mentor, Catalina Guerrero Troyo, for her dedication and patience in guiding me through the final chapters and ensuring the success of this thesis. I also want to thank Professor Ramiro Ramirez for his constant availability to help. Furthermore, I want to thank the Director of the English Department, Mr. Leslie Elizondo, for his assistance at the beginning of this thesis process.

I would like to extend my gratitude to each of my professors throughout my studies for their help, for taking the time to explain, and for shaping my responsibility as a student through their demands. It is an honor to learn from professors like Margarita Pérez Roig, who impart their extensive knowledge. Thank you so much for every new lesson and piece of knowledge I acquired from each of them, both academically and personally.

Finally, and in a very special way, I want to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Luis Diego Marín. His knowledge, kindness, respect, and dedication, both professionally and personally, enrich any student who is fortunate enough to know him.

Dedication

I want to dedicate this project and the culmination of my degree to God, for enlightening me, for giving me wisdom, for guiding me, and above all, for never letting me give up along the way despite all the obstacles.

Secondly, I want to dedicate this achievement to my family, to every one of them who, in large or small ways, offered their help during this stage. I also want to thank my boyfriend, Fabián, for accompanying me, supporting me, and celebrating my small achievements throughout my degree.

Finally, and no less importantly, I want to dedicate this to my pet rabbit, who, with his mischievous antics, shared my study space, night after night and assignment after assignment. Thank you for your innocent and loving companionship, my little pet.

Abstract

El Arte de Amar is a work by sociologist, psychologist, and philosopher Erich Fromm. Initially written in English, it was translated into Spanish in 1959. This work, which explores social psychology themes, shows how love requires certain elements to be authentic and genuine. While not all readers may fully grasp its ideas, it is a book that enriches our understanding of love.

The purpose of this research was guided by the research question: To what extent can love be understood as a learned psychological capacity, based on knowledge, responsibility, respect, and care, according to Erich Fromm's theory? It analyzes love from a psychological perspective to more rationally understand the ideas presented in his work. Although written in the last century, his ideas are not limited to his time but rather reflect a healthier and more realistic vision of what love should be. Therefore, this thesis seeks to reveal the essence of genuine love, understanding it not as something conditioned by a particular era, but as an experience based on human psychological aspects.

Finally, using a qualitative hermeneutic approach, the study compares and demonstrates that genuine love is always governed by fundamental and mentally healthy elements such as care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. These elements are also important in other areas of human life.

In conclusion, the study shows that psychology, within the act of loving, approaches it as a skill, suggesting that it is not simply an emotion; it involves practice and growth. Love should be a healthy relationship with us and with those around us. Furthermore, the study's findings lead us to reflect on how we manage emotional and social relationships in modern society.

Resumen

El Arte de Amar es una obra del sociólogo, psicólogo y filósofo Erich Fromm. Escrita originalmente en inglés, fue traducida al español en 1959. Esta obra, que explora temas de psicología social, muestra cómo el amor requiere ciertos elementos para ser auténtico y genuino. Si bien no todos los lectores comprenderán plenamente sus ideas, es un libro que enriquece nuestra comprensión del amor.

El propósito de esta investigación se guió por la siguiente pregunta: ¿Hasta qué punto puede entenderse el amor como una capacidad psicológica aprendida, basada en el conocimiento, la responsabilidad, el respeto y el cuidado, según la teoría de Erich Fromm? Analiza el amor desde una perspectiva psicológica para comprender de manera más racional las ideas presentadas en su obra. Aunque escrita en el siglo pasado, sus ideas no se limitan a su época, sino que reflejan una visión más sana y realista de lo que debería ser el amor. Por lo tanto, esta tesis busca revelar la esencia del amor genuino, entendiéndolo no como algo condicionado por una época particular, sino como una experiencia basada en aspectos psicológicos humanos.

Finalmente, mediante un enfoque hermenéutico cualitativo, el estudio compara y demuestra que el amor genuino siempre se rige por elementos fundamentales y mentalmente saludables como el cuidado, la responsabilidad, el respeto y el conocimiento. Estos elementos también son importantes en otras áreas de la vida humana.

En conclusión, el estudio muestra que la psicología, dentro del acto de amar, lo aborda como una habilidad, sugiriendo que no es simplemente una emoción; implica práctica y crecimiento. El amor debe ser una relación sana con nosotros mismos y con quienes nos

rodean. Además, los hallazgos del estudio nos llevan a reflexionar sobre cómo gestionamos las relaciones emocionales y sociales en la sociedad moderna.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I.....	15
INTRODUCTORY FRAMEWORK.....	15
1.1 Problem Statement.....	15
1.2 Objectives	16
1.3 Justification	16
1.4 Antecedents	18
1.5 Scope.....	22
1.5.1 Subject of study.....	22
1.5.2 Approach or perspective: psychological-humanistic	23
1.5.3 Limits of the analysis: aspects included and excluded.....	23
1.5.4 Temporal or theoretical context.....	23
1.5.5 Purpose: what the analysis seeks to achieve	24
CHAPTER II.....	25
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	25
2.1 Historical Overview.....	25
2.1.1 Historical context of the work.....	26
2.2 Theoretical framework.....	27
2.2.1 Definition of love according to <i>El Arte de Amar</i>	27
2.2.2 Love as an art and a learned skill	28
2.2.3 Types of love according to Fromm.....	29
2.3 Psychological Underpinnings of Fromm's Theory of Love	35
2.3.1 Influence of the humanist approach on his thought	35
2.3.2 Instinctive affection vs. deliberate emotional engagement.....	35
2.3.3 Fundamental values of love according to Fromm	36
2.4 Criticism of the consumerist view of modern love	39
2.5 Psychological Models of Love	40

2.6 Components of the Triangular Theory	40
2.7 Similarities with Fromm	41
2.8 Ahmad Ramsés Barragán's Cognitive-Emotional Theory	42
2.8.1 Love as emotion vs. intentional construction	43
2.9 Considerations of Clinical Psychological Article: Love Addiction, Adult Attachment Patterns, and Self-Esteem	44
2. 10 Lee's and Katyayani's theories under "Love Style Theories"	45
2. 11 Investigation of Mariam Fernández Castro	46
2. 12 Contemporary Relevance of Fromm's Theory of Love	47
2. 13 Criticism of the superficiality of love in the digital age.....	47
2. 12 The relevance of Fromm's thinking to current emotional challenges.....	48
CHAPTER III.....	51
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.....	51
3.1 Research approach.....	51
3.2 Research design	52
3.3 Type of research.....	53
3.4 Sources Information	53
3.5 Data collection instrument	57
3.5.1 Table 1 based on the specific Objective number one.....	58
3.5.2 Table 2 based on the specific Objective number two	58
3.5.3 Table 3 based on the specific Objective number three	58
3.5.4 Themes, motifs and symbols	59
3.5.5 Table 1 themes	59
3.5.6 Table 2 motifs	60
3.5.7 Table 3 symbols.....	60
3.6 Categories of analysis	60
3.6.1 Love as Art and Practice.....	61

3.7 Types of Love and Their Psychological Function.....	61
3.7.1 Love and Mental Health	61
3.7.2 Love in Modern Society	62
CHAPTER IV	63
DATA ANALYSIS	63
4.1 Approaches to the investigation: Definition of approach and relationship between book and main approach selected.....	63
4.2 Theories vs. literary work.....	64
4.3 Themes, Motifs, and Symbols	75
4.3.1 Table 4. Themes	75
4.3.2 Table 5. Motifs	79
4.3.3 Table 6. Symbols	85
CHAPTER V	93
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	93
5.1 Purpose of the Conclusions	93
5.2 Conclusions.....	93
5.2.1 Conclusion General Objective	94
5.2.2 Conclusion Specific Objective #1.	94
5.2.3 Conclusion Specific Objective #2.	95
5.2.4 Conclusion Specific Objective #3.	96
5.3 Restatement of the Research Question.....	97
5.4 Recommendations	98
References.....	102

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY FRAMEWORK

1.1 Problem Statement

Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar* remains one of the most influential works in humanistic psychology and modern thought. In this book, Fromm argues that love is not a spontaneous feeling that arises in people, but an art that must be learned, practiced, and cultivated through personal growth and self-knowledge. Over the decades, the work has been widely analyzed from philosophical, sociological, and ethical perspectives, highlighting its moral and cultural implications. However, despite its relevance, the psychological dimension of Fromm's proposal, particularly the explanation of the internal processes that enable the capacity to love, has received little attention in literary and psychological analyses.

This lack of psychological exploration creates a gap in understanding of how Fromm's theory relates to fundamental aspects of personality development, emotional maturity, and self-awareness. In a contemporary society marked by individualism, emotional disconnection, and superficiality in human relationships, it is especially pertinent to revisit Fromm's psychological conception of love. The problem, therefore, lies in the insufficient attention that *El Arte de Amar* has received from a psychological perspective that articulates its literary value with its reading and understanding.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar* from a psychological perspective, focusing on how the author conceives of love as a conscious and disciplined act, based on human development and emotional balance. By analyzing the psychological principles that underpin his vision of love as self-love, maturity, and the overcoming of narcissism, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the human condition and highlight the relevance of Fromm's thought in contemporary psychological discourse.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 General Objective

- To analyze love as a psychological capacity that can be developed through knowledge, responsibility, respect, and care, based on Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar*.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

- To identify psychological principles and values expressed in *El Arte de Amar*.
- To examine how Fromm conceptualizes love as a learned skill within a psychological context.
- To compare Fromm's approach to love with other psychological theories and models.

1.3 Justification

The book *El Arte de Amar*, written by Erich Fromm and first published in Spanish in 1959, is an essay that combines philosophy and psychology. Erich Fromm was a German author renowned for his works, which mainly cover topics related to philosophy, ethics, and psychology. Fromm decided to give psychology a more humanistic and social perspective, unlike orthodox psychoanalysis, which is based on the unconscious and the psychic.

Building upon this humanistic approach, the book, centered on the psychology of the act of love, focuses on understanding how loving a person can be an art that can be learned, like any other known or common art, such as music or medicine. The book understands love as an art or skill that can be acquired and not as a spontaneous feeling. It analyzes not only erotic love, but also brotherly love, maternal love, and others, such as self-love and love for the transcendental.

This perspective becomes even more significant when considered in the context of modern society, where superficial love is common in every sense. This topic is relevant in today's society because it offers a profound reflection on what we understand as love and the way we consider loving in an increasingly materialistic, superficial, and individualistic society. In

the 21st century, with people exposed to and within reach of social media, social situations such as love seem simple since they are easily accessible on social media for any user through simple steps. This refers to dating apps and quick connections to find a partner as if they were an object that is easy to acquire. This observation aligns with Fromm's assertion that love is not based on immediacy or superficial attraction.

In this regard, the book transcends the concept of love as an experience based solely on desire and romanticism and refers to it as something that involves ethics and spirit. Respect in love implies that it is a concept inherent to humanity as such. The idea of love has been believed to be separate from humanity, and that is where we forget that it includes human and social values, such as respect and responsibility. These two values are part of other important areas of humanity.

In addition to respect and responsibility, Fromm presents the concept of freedom as one of the foundations that must be present when we love. Freedom is also part of other particular areas of a human being's daily life. As previously mentioned, with the example of love and respect, with freedom, the idea of love and freedom should not be separated. Despite this, people have created concepts and values that, when analyzed deeply, fall outside the context of love.

One of the common concepts or even synonyms for love is magic. However, in his book, Fromm proposes that love is not something that happens out of nowhere, as magic supposedly does. Fromm proposes that authentic love develops and requires commitment and respect. This association is the response to the creation of the idea that love is something spontaneous and almost impossible to achieve. Furthermore, just like any other value, real love is something intentional that must be decided to be built daily. The decision to love requires commitment and knowledge. We cannot expect love to arise if our intentions are opposite. Love is not magic.

Therefore, the issue analyzed in this work is the art of love: learning what love is, learning how to love, and what skills are needed to cultivate and create love. The issue is not

really love itself, but rather the way love is perceived, the way it is interpreted, and what we do with that supposed love. The current issue is that of materializing everything, of wanting to get what we want with money and quickly. The issue is sexualizing everything.

Considering all of the above, the analysis of this work today is very enriching for those who know how to interpret its reading. In a society where emotional problems are on the rise, not only in relation to romantic partners but also in terms of parents to children, children to parents, social, fraternal, erotic, self-love, and even religious matters, reading and analyzing this work is enriching. Ultimately, Fromm does not only focus on romantic love; he analyzes important concepts and values for a healthier, more respectful, and even more analytical society. A more analytical society results in a healthier world and cleaner bonds.

1.4 Antecedents

This section contains studies, theories, previous research, and relevant facts related to the topic to be investigated. Its purpose is to contextualize the problem, demonstrate what is known so far, and justify the need for the current study. This section analyzes and summarizes the contributions of other researchers, identifies gaps or limitations in the existing literature, and establishes the theoretical basis that supports your own work.

The first antecedent related to this work is the academic article *Las ideas del amor de R.J. Sternberg: la teoría triangular y la teoría narrativa del amor* (R.J. Sternberg's ideas on love: the triangular theory and the narrative theory of love) by Alba Almeida Eleno. The article is based on an analysis of the two theories of love put forward by Robert J. Sternberg, which are: the first theory is the triangular theory of love and the second is the narrative theory of love.

The first theory is based on three specific elements that make up romantic relationships. These elements are intimacy, passion, and commitment. Sternberg defined intimacy as something that includes closeness, union, respect, devotion, and more. This last characteristic mentioned by Robert is linked to Fromm's idea about the power of giving in love. Robert talks about giving oneself. Fromm (1959) expressed the following idea: "In the act of loving, of giving

oneself, in the act of penetrating the other person, I find myself, I discover myself, I discover us both, I discover man” (p. 49). Robert, for his part, expresses his theory of giving oneself focused on passionate love, but it is still love in a certain way, unlike Erich, who talks about many types of love that exist, such as fraternal or maternal love, and their different forms of giving oneself.

Furthermore, this first example shows us how Robert views people as objects rather than as individuals. In this case, what really matters to people is not the person as such, but rather how they can be used to satisfy their needs. This ties in with Fromm's theory that in the Victorian era, people first sought a partner without any love, then love developed after marriage. However, in the 20th century, this attitude was reversed, and now people consider that loving is a simple thing, and the difficult thing is finding what or which object to love. Furthermore, consumerism today generally follows the pattern of seeing, desiring, and acquiring. Something similar happens with people. People want to “acquire people” for the simple fact of desiring them as objects.

If we relate the book *El Arte de Amar* to this article based on the Ideas of Love, we find similarities that naturally relate to the theme of love. Although we must dig deeper to find similarities, they are not far from their focus. Whenever we talk about love, we may be talking about the same thing expressed in different ways and in different forms of giving love. What lies at its root are many principles, such as respect, for example.

The second antecedent corresponds to a theoretical article by Ahmad Ramsés Barragán Estrada entitled *DEFINIENDO EL AMOR MÁS ALLÁ DE UNA EMOCIÓN: FUNCIONES Y CARACTERÍSTICAS EN TORNO AL BIENESTAR* published in the *Iztacala Electronic Journal of Psychology*, owned by the Universidad Autónoma de México. As a theoretical review article, this article seeks to define the concept of love. According to the author, love can be perceived from different categories, as Burunat (2019) mentioned “El amor dentro de una relación de pareja sigue siendo una variable de estudio complicada que causa debate por no saber si debe ser conceptualizada como una emoción, un afecto, una motivación, un estado de ánimo, un

sentimiento o incluso una adicción natural saludable” (as cited in Barragán, 2025, p. 282). Thus, the author of this article seeks to “accommodate” love to one of these concepts proposed by Burunat.

The article analyzes whether love is an emotion, which results in not completely ruling out the idea, since Barragán (2025) it is evident that every form of love, whether romantic, companionate, maternal, or social, involves the manifestation of emotions that vary in their level of intensity or activation (arousal) (p. 287). Despite this, according to the article, love is something that is built with intention and sensibility, and not only with emotions.

Both works take the approach that it is not something that simply happens, but rather something that can be measured through certain learned behaviors. Although Barragán and Fromm express these ideas differently, they lead to the same conclusion when viewed from a logical perspective. This logical progression supports the hypothesis that love requires intentionality and emotional maturity.

The third reference is a research article called Love Addiction, Adult Attachment Patterns and Self-Esteem: Testing for Mediation Using Path Analysis by Alessio Gori et al. The article, published in 2023 by the Journal of Personalized Medicine, used various research methods, such as surveys of people in relationships, to demonstrate the results.

The research article is very recent, so it has a very psychological approach in a very modern style. Reading Fromm's book and the article by Alessio Gori et al. allows us to complement ideas. On the one hand, Fromm's ideas sought to predict the bad relationships that could arise in people according to absurd behaviors that do not correspond to love, and on the other hand, the recent study by Gori et al. shows in a more psychological way the number of problems that love can generate when it becomes dependent.

In fact, Fromm explains that love must be freedom and that freedom only comes when we stop being dependent, as he explains with the example of masochism and sadism. Both the

masochistic and the submissive person are dependent on each other. Freedom is therefore achieved through something active, which, even though it becomes one, remains two.

This recent article perfectly supports what Fromm wrote in his book *El Arte de Amar* when he mentions masochism and sadism. These are theories centered on psychology, the consequences of turning love into an addiction, such as addiction to a modern drug or even addictions such as social media or exercise.

So far, this article also refers to a person as an object. Gori et al. (2023) mentioned “This condition is featured by an alteration of the representation of self, as an extremely needy subject of guidance, support, and protection, and of the other (the object of dependence) being extremely idealized” (p. 1). This article states that an extremely idealized person is an object of dependence for the person referred to as an extremely needy subject. This turns love dependence into a game between an extremely needy subject and an object of dependence.

The fourth antecedent is the psychological research study Influence of Attachment Styles on Intimacy and Love Styles. Published by the International Journey of Indian Psychology journal, it was created by psychology student Komal Katyayani and approved on May 10, 2024. Like the previous study, this study used surveys to show results. It also analyzed attachment styles in young adults.

It also analyzed love styles, which are eros, ludus, mania, agape, and pragma. These are included in John Alan Lee's theory of the chromatic circle of love. In basic terms, they comprise passionate, playful, obsessive, selfless, and practical love.

The last antecedent is similar to the previous study in that it analyzed a specific population. Unlike the previous one, this study focused on the beliefs about romantic love among adolescents attending the University of Costa Rica. The work is entitled Creencias del amor romántico: grado de acuerdo hacia las mismas y diferencias según género, en estudiantes adolescentes que asisten a la Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente, and

was carried out by Mariam Fernández Castro, a psychology student pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology.

According to its results, this study shows significant differences in thinking about Fromm's theories and what most students between the ages of 18 and 19 consider. According to this study, which revealed the myths of love that Fromm would not consider ideal.

The author of this work mentioned that Pascual (2016) stated that “romantic love refers to a model of love influenced by courtly, bourgeois, and Victorian love, which is based on the dependence between men and women” (as cited by Fernández, 2022, p. 19). This quote is precisely one of the situations that Fromm highlighted, perhaps not directly emphasizing the Victorian era or any other, but rather seeking to eliminate characteristics or beliefs about love present in some of these models.

During these styles of love, men and women had very distinct concepts of masculinity and femininity. A highly stipulated gender role leads to sexism, since in eras such as the Victorian era, women were expected to be dependent in love. This is something Fromm would not accept, according to his book *El Arte de Amar*.

This study will serve to provide a stark contrast to the myths and beliefs that contradict Erich's theories in his work, which attempts to see love as more than just a feeling or something that arises. For Fromm, loving is an art like any other that involves the mind, care, and intention to do things right.

1.5 Scope

1.5.1 Subject of study

The subject of study in this thesis is Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar*, a seminal text in humanistic psychology and 20th-century existential thought. The analysis focuses on the central theme of love, understood not as a simple passive emotion or biological impulse, but as a capacity that requires knowledge, maturity, discipline, and personal development. The research

seeks to understand how Fromm presents love as a voluntary and conscious act that reflects psychological health and human fulfillment.

1.5.2 Approach or perspective: psychological-humanistic

The study adopts a psychological-humanistic approach, which allows the work to be interpreted from Fromm's perspective as a psychoanalyst and humanist. This perspective is based on the idea that love is an expression of inner growth and the individual's natural tendency toward self-realization. The notions of freedom, responsibility, individuality, and emotional maturity will be analyzed as pillars of Frommian thought in relation to the psychological needs of modern human beings.

1.5.3 Limits of the analysis: aspects included and excluded

The analysis focuses exclusively on the concepts and approaches presented in *El Arte de Amar*, drawing on secondary theoretical sources that help to contextualize and understand the author's psychological proposal. Extensive comparisons with other works by Fromm will not be addressed, nor will clinical, religious, or philosophical analyses outside the humanistic framework be included. Nor will an exhaustive biographical review of the author be developed, except for those aspects necessary to understand his psychological thinking.

1.5.4 Temporal or theoretical context

The work is analyzed within the intellectual context of the postwar period, during which Fromm developed his critique of the dehumanization of modern man. This theoretical context is framed within the transition from classical psychoanalysis to the humanistic and existential currents of psychology, where the search for meaning, authenticity, and genuine love takes on special relevance. The influence of Marxist and Freudian thought on the configuration of Fromm's psychological vision will also be considered.

However, despite being set in the specific context of the post-war period of the 20th century, the work transcends temporal and cultural barriers, demonstrating remarkable relevance in contemporary society. Erich Fromm's concepts of love as an active and conscious

capacity remain relevant in the face of current challenges related to individualization, the crisis of interpersonal relationships, and the search for meaning in an increasingly fragmented and digitized world. Thus, his humanistic approach invites deep reflection on the ways of loving in modernity, positioning *El Arte de Amar* as a fundamental text for understanding and addressing the affective and emotional dynamics that characterize our era.

1.5.5 Purpose: what the analysis seeks to achieve

The purpose of this thesis is to interpret *El Arte de Amar* as a psychological proposal for the integral development of the individual, highlighting the role of love as a transformative force and as the basis of mental health. Through this analysis, we seek to show that, for Fromm, loving is a conscious practice that requires self-knowledge, emotional discipline, and openness to others, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of love as a psychological and existential phenomenon.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Historical Overview

Erich Fromm was a prominent German psychoanalyst, philosopher, and sociologist. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica (n. d.) “Erich Fromm (born March 23, 1900, Frankfurt am Main, Germany—died March 18, 1980, Muralto, Switzerland)”. He is recognized as one of the main representatives of the Frankfurt School, a group of thinkers who combined Marxist thought, psychoanalysis, and social criticism. Kellner explains “Erich Fromm (1900-1980) was one of the first to carry through a synthesis of Marx and Freud, and to develop a Marxian social psychology”. From this integration, Fromm sought to understand how social conditions influence personality and the capacity to love. This perspective is clearly reflected in *El Arte de Amar*, where the author proposes that authentic love can only develop in a society that fosters individual freedom and self-realization.

During his youth, Fromm was deeply interested in psychology and religion. He studied sociology at the University of Heidelberg. Britannica mentions (n.d.) “receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Heidelberg in 1922”. After his doctorate, he began his training in psychoanalysis. Britannica (n. d.) mentions “Fromm trained in psychoanalysis at the University of Munich and at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute”. Britannica (n.d.) mentions “explored the interaction between psychology and society”. Throughout his career, Fromm devoted himself to analyzing the relationship between the individual and modern society, highlighting how social structures influence freedom, love, and mental health. Among his most important works are *El miedo a la libertad* (1941), *El Arte de Amar* (1956), *La sociedad sana* (1955) y *Tener o ser* (1976).

Fromm (1959) argues “si deseamos aprender a amar, debemos proceder en la misma forma en que lo haríamos si quisiéramos aprender cualquier otro arte, música, pintura,

carpintería o el arte de la medicina o la ingeniería” (p. 18). He posits that love is not just a spontaneous feeling, but an art that requires knowledge, discipline, and commitment. Through his humanistic thinking, he sought to promote a more conscious, empathetic society free from the pressures of consumerism and alienation.

Erich Fromm left a legacy in humanistic psychology and social philosophy. His critical and humanistic vision continues to inspire those who seek to understand love, freedom, and human nature from a profound and ethical perspective.

From a psychological perspective, Erich Fromm's work reflects his profound interest in understanding human nature and the internal mechanisms that determine the capacity to love. His training as a psychoanalyst significantly influenced his interpretation of love, considering it not only an emotion but a manifestation of the mature development of personality. For Fromm, love implies emotional balance, self-knowledge, and overcoming narcissism, essential elements for achieving a healthy relationship with oneself and with others. This psychological vision is the basis of his work *El Arte de Amar*, which explores love as a skill that is learned and cultivated through conscious practice and emotional maturity.

2.1.1 Historical context of the work

El Arte de Amar was written by Erich Fromm in 1956, at a time marked by the psychological and social effects of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica (n. d.), “World War II, conflict that involved virtually every part of the world during the years 1939–45”. Pedraza (2025) “The Cold War, as a historical period, ranged from 1947 to 1991” (p. 1). During the influence of these two periods, Western society, especially the United States, experienced a period of material prosperity, but also one of emotional emptiness and loss of humanity. The rise of consumerism, individualism, and the pursuit of economic success led to a widespread feeling of loneliness and alienation.

Fromm, influenced by Freudian psychoanalysis, humanistic Marxism, and emerging humanistic psychology, interpreted these phenomena from a psychological perspective. In this

context, *El Arte de Amar* emerges as a response to the emotional and existential crisis of modern humanity, proposing that love is not a simple, spontaneous feeling, but a capacity that is learned and cultivated through emotional maturity, responsibility, and self-knowledge.

Thus, the work reflects Fromm's concern for mental and emotional health in a world dominated by superficiality, conformism, and dehumanization. His proposal of love as art represents an attempt to reconnect individual psychology with social life, promoting personal growth and empathy as paths to a freer and more authentic existence.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The present theoretical framework aims to define concepts, concepts of author theories, and the contrast and comparison of fundamental concepts for understanding literary analysis with a psychological approach to the book *El Arte de Amar*. Through understanding and analysis of the concepts developed in *El Arte de Amar* and the selected background, a solid foundation is established for understanding the problems and objectives set for this work. The theoretical framework is essential for adequately interpreting the psychological objective of literary analysis.

To begin, it is necessary to explore the concepts or questions proposed by Fromm. The author developed the first chapter of his work by questioning whether love is an art. According to Fromm (1959) ¿el amor necesita conciencia y voluntad o solamente una respuesta emocional agradable que se puede encontrar en cualquier lugar con suerte? Indeed, the premise of the book is the first question; however, the author emphasizes that society considers the second question as viable to define the concept of loving a person.

2.2.1 Definition of love according to *El Arte de Amar*

Love is conceptualized as an art that is learned through skills; the act of loving is learned through voluntary actions and the intentions each person chooses to pursue. It also includes the idea that love arises from the freedom and individuality of each person. Love should not be a passive or active symbiosis, as Fromm expresses. According to Fromm (1959) “La forma pasiva de la unión simbiótica es la sumisión o, para usar un término clínico, el masoquismo.” (p. 35). It

refers to the fact that a masochistic person within a romantic relationship becomes an instrument of another; they are not independent and lack integrity, and this is not love if it is emphasized that loving is individual and free. Fromm (1959) mentions “la forma activa de la fusión simbiótica es la dominación o, para utilizar el término correspondiente a masoquismo, el sadismo.” (p. 36). In both cases, both people are dependent on each other. This explains why love cannot be a symbiotic relationship, as the author points out in the following quote. Fromm (1959) explains “en contraste con la unión simbiótica, el amor maduro significa unión a condición de preservar la propia integridad, la propia individualidad.” (p. 37). It is understood why love does not include dependencies, and if it does, we are closer to a symbiotic relationship than to love.

Love is not a feeling that is experienced passively; love requires being active, as Fromm (1959) mentions, “Una tercera manera de lograr la unión reside en la actividad creadora, sea la del artista o la del artesano.” (p. 33). The above indicates that love must be active and not passive. In a shorter definition, it follows that love must be a verb of actions and not a spontaneous feeling.

2.2.2 Love as an art and a learned skill

Love is an art that can be learned like any other art. Fromm (1959) mentions “El primer paso que debe darse es tomar conciencia de que el amor es un arte, tal como es un arte el vivir” (p. 18). Fromm (1959) suggests “si deseamos aprender a amar, debemos proceder en la misma forma en que lo haríamos si quisiéramos aprender cualquier otro arte, música, pintura, carpintería o el arte de la medicina o la ingeniería” (p. 18). Evaluating Fromm's statements is an important step in understanding the concept of love. If we interpret love as an art, we must understand that it is something that is learned and cultivated, not something that simply happens, as we have considered it.

When love is considered an art, it is assumed that it is not simply a spontaneous emotion or a fortuitous event, but a complex skill that requires knowledge, practice, and inner

disposition. As in medicine, carpentry, or any trade that demands technical skill, love involves a combination of knowing and doing, of understanding and action. It is not enough to feel; it is necessary to learn to love, which requires discipline, patience, and a deep awareness of oneself and of the other.

This perspective not only demystifies romantic love, freeing it from the passive ideals of fate or inevitable attraction, but also reaffirms its formative and ethical nature. Love, from this perspective, becomes an art form that transcends the mere emotional to become a process of self-discovery and personal growth. Instead of depending on circumstances or the idealization of the loved one, the subject recognizes themselves as an active agent in the construction of the emotional bond.

From a psychological perspective, this conception of love as an art places the individual in front of their own capacity for emotional maturity. It requires self-knowledge, empathy, and responsibility, virtues that only develop with time and experience. Love ceases to be a projection of shortcomings or idealized desires and becomes an acquired human capacity, an exercise in freedom and commitment that involves both reason and sensitivity.

In literary terms, this vision displaces the traditional narrative of idealized love prevalent in Romanticism and its heirs to propose a more existential and conscious perspective. Love is, therefore, a creative act, a work in constant progress, where human beings confront their limits, their desire for permanence, and the need to transcend the ego. Thus, love as an art is not only learned but also transforms the subject, becoming a vital practice that demands dedication, reflection, and constant evolution.

2.2.3 Types of love according to Fromm

Erich Fromm identifies five different types of love, all of which are based on the same conditions and the basic capacity to love. This statement constitutes one of the central axes of his thought, since love, for Fromm, is not conceived as a fortuitous feeling or dependent on external circumstances, but rather as an active attitude of the human being towards the world

and towards himself. Fromm (1959) explains “que no hay diferencias entre los diversos tipos de amor, que dependen de la clase de objeto que se ama” (p. 68). This statement emphasizes that the essence of love lies in the subject's internal capacity, a universal faculty that manifests itself in different ways depending on the loved object, whether it be a person, humanity, oneself, or even a transcendent idea.

From a psychological perspective, this notion refers to the idea that love is a character disposition, not a passing emotion. Loving involves a process of personal development that integrates affection, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. Thus, the different types of love described by Fromm are not isolated compartments, but rather diverse expressions of the same psychic and moral energy, directed toward different objects without losing their common root. In this sense, maternal love, erotic love, fraternal love, self-love, and love of God share the same vital principle: the ability to transcend oneself to recognize and affirm the other as a being.

From a literary perspective, this conception allows us to analyze how love, in its multiple manifestations, becomes a narrative motif that reveals the inner evolution of characters. In many works, the way an individual loves reflects their degree of emotional maturity and their relationship with the world. By understanding love as a unifying capacity that takes on different forms, each type of love can be interpreted as representing a stage of human growth, both in real life and in literature.

In the following sections, the five types of love considered in this work are presented and analyzed, exploring how each expresses a distinct dimension of the human condition and how, together, they illustrate Fromm's vision of love as an art and as a conscious act of inner fulfillment.

2.2.3.1 Brotherly love. Brotherly love is one of the types of love that contains the most basic keys to the types of love. Fromm (1959) expressed that “por él se entiende el sentido de responsabilidad, cuidado, respeto y conocimiento con respecto a cualquier otro ser humano, el deseo de promover su vida” (p. 68). In this way it is understood that this type of love

implies love for my brothers; the term brothers in this context refers to our fellow human beings. Fromm (1959) mentions the main characteristic of brotherly love “se caracteriza por su falta de exclusividad” (p. 68). This is equivalent to stating that we must love all our fellow human beings regardless of their differences or particular characteristics, such as their status as helpless, poor, or unknown, as Fromm suggests in his work.

Fromm (1959) said “el amor solo comienza a desarrollarse cuando amamos a quienes no necesitamos para nuestros fines personales” (p. 70). This expression shows that brotherly love, nor any other form of love, is born of interest or need. Love doesn't involve using a person as an object to serve a specific purpose and therefore loving them because they serve us. Love is loving an individual for the fact that they are themselves in their individuality.

2.2.3.2 Maternal love. Maternal love is that which by its nature is produced from the mother to the child, or better expressed, to her descendant. Fromm (1959) expressed “y es precisamente por su carácter altruista y generoso que el amor materno ha sido considerado la forma más elevada del amor, y el más sagrado de todos los vínculos emocionales” (p. 72). The love or relationship between mother and child is unequal, since the child exists without any capacity to defend himself or grow, and the mother provides for his needs without receiving anything in return.

Fromm wrote in the chapter on maternal love that maternal love presents two fundamental characteristics rooted in love: the luck of having been born and with it the love of life and the desire to stay alive during life. Fromm (1959) emphasized “la tierra prometida (la tierra es siempre un símbolo materno) se describe cómo plena de leche y miel” (p. 72). This phrase affirms the two concepts that a good mother, filled with affection, instills in her child. From an analytical perspective, milk has been suggested as one of the symbols that represent care and, consequently, love. Regarding the term honey, it is suggested that honey represents the sweetness of life, love, and happiness. Fromm (1959) observed that “la mayoría de las madres son capaces de dar leche, pero solo unas pocas pueden dar miel también” (p. 72).

Although all mothers seem to possess both qualities, only a small number of women have the capacity to give both milk and honey. For a woman to be capable of giving "honey," she must be happy in her individuality as a person. Not all women possess this happiness, as some fail to achieve happiness.

A child detects when his mother transmits love, just as he can detect when that mother transmits anxiety. The real problem is not that the child detects his mother's feelings; the real problem is that both feelings and emotions are transmitted to the child. Fromm (1959) points out that "es posible distinguir entre los niños — y los adultos— los que solo recibieron "leche" y los que recibieron "leche y miel"" (p. 72). This is deeply related to love as it is notably the person or child who was truly loved and not just cared for (fed, protected).

While maternal love has been mentioned as one of the most altruistic and sacred, there are also psychological aspects integrated into humanity, such as the condition of narcissism and maternal narcissism. When a mother experiences that her child remains a fragment attached to her, she may experience a certain type of pleasure that brings satisfaction to the mother; this is classified as narcissism. Furthermore, for a woman with dominant and possessive qualities, feeling that her child, because of his helplessness, is completely under her will, turns him into a type of object to satisfy her needs for dominance and power.

However, the child grows up and must leave his mother and become an individual, separate from his mother. At that point, the mother truly experiences the maternal love of making the separation from her child. While the child was in her womb and during the first months of life, they were practically one, mother and child, over time the child leaves the mother's breast, begins to walk, and experiences situations that gradually lead him to become completely separate from his mother. It is in this setting that the true essence of maternal love is experienced, where one desires happiness and individuality for the loved one. This type of maternal love is one of the most difficult to experience because one desires nothing for oneself but only for the person one loves.

2.2.3.3 Erotic love. Erotic love is the passion that unites two people. It is an exclusive love; however, it must be based on brotherly love that entails respect, care, and responsibility. Fromm (1959) indicates that “por su propia naturaleza, es exclusivo y no universal” (p. 75). For this reason, it's exclusive, and it contrasts with other types of love, even though it does require some of the foundations present in brotherly love, such as those mentioned above. People mistakenly associate this type of love with the experience of falling in love. There's a belief that when someone transcends the boundaries of intimacy, they're no longer a stranger, and therefore, there's no need to continue getting to know them. People cite intimacy or sexual contact as the greatest act of intimacy. Erotic love awakens the desire for sexual relations; however, if this love isn't linked to brotherly love, then it doesn't lead to union, a fundamental characteristic of love.

The exclusivity of erotic love has been interpreted as possession; however, being exclusive refers to being exclusive only in the form of sexual merging with a single person. Through erotic love, one must be capable of loving one's fellow human beings through the other person. Therefore, erotic love must maintain qualities of fraternal love. Being in love is almost more selfish than feeling love, since it only idealizes and feels love for one person, not for other living beings. This makes it something totally separate from humanity.

Fromm (1959) mentions “el amor erótico, si es amor, tiene una premisa. Amar desde la esencia del ser —y vivenciar a la otra persona en la esencia de su ser—” (p. 79). Therefore, we should not think or care about who we love, since love is a decision made with the will to love a person with the intention of loving them back. Love is not a simple feeling, as it has been imposed; a feeling disappears and can even constantly change like any other feeling. Fromm (1959) states that “cabe llegar a la conclusión de que el amor es exclusivamente un acto de voluntad y un compromiso” (p. 80). It does not matter who the other person is, since we can only love them with the will and decision to love them.

2.2.3.4 Self-love. Self-love or love for oneself is considered selfish by some authors. Fromm (1959) mentions that “tal punto de vista se remonta a los comienzos del pensamiento occidental” (p. 81). Thus, one of the authors who shared this idea was Calvin. Calvin was a theologian who described self-love as a plague. Freud also shared Calvin's ideas, characterizing self-love as narcissistic. Despite these authors' beliefs, self-love is defined as deeply linked to love of neighbor, since we ourselves are still human and nothing excludes us from other human beings. The respect and commitment that any other type of love possesses must exist within self-love.

Because self-love and any other kind of love are not separate, it must be understood that he who loves all human beings, both known and unknown, must love himself by applying the principles of *El Arte de Amar*. Fromm (1959) points out “Amar a una persona implica amar el hombre como tal” (p. 84). If we love our neighbor, we love ourselves, since nothing excludes us from being human. Hence, self-love cannot be selfish because a selfish person wants everything for themselves and feels only for themselves. Fromm (1959) points out “la persona solo se interesa por sí misma, desea todo para sí misma, no siente placer en dar, sino únicamente en tomar” (p. 85)

2.2.3.5 Love for God. The love of God is defined as one of the greatest loves a person can achieve. Like other types of love, its capacities are not separate; however, it has the characteristic of being a higher form of love. Fromm (1959) expresses “el amor a Dios no puede separarse del amor a los padres” (p. 110). When people go through childhood, the love of God is seen as more matriarchal and patriarchal. Despite this, the love of God as the years go by must become a mature love that transcends fear and dependence and becomes a love that integrates both matriarchal and patriarchal characteristics. Fromm (1959) mentions “Dios se torna verdad, amor, justicia” (p. 96). Mature love does not require a patriarchal or matriarchal God; on the contrary, it must overcome these concepts and love from a vision of symbols, as the author expressed.

2.3 Psychological Underpinnings of Fromm's Theory of Love

Love should not be considered a feeling or an emotion. Throughout each chapter, Erich Fromm emphasizes that love is an active attitude and a capacity that is acquired, like any art, be it medicine, music, or carpentry. To understand the reasons why love can be considered a psychological rather than a spontaneous phenomenon, it is necessary to analyze the values and psychological foundations on which his work is based. This will help us understand how to love maturely, regardless of what we are loving.

2.3.1 Influence of the humanist approach on his thought

Fromm brought love closer to a humanistic approach, considering that humanism represents a goal of an integrated, dignified life and living authentically in complete happiness. Copson (2015) defines "It stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethic based on human and other natural values in the spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities" (p. 6). For Fromm, love is not dependence but rather connecting with other living beings freely and ethically without losing harmony or individuality. In this sense, if we analyze love for others from Fromm's perspective and analyze humanism, we find important ideas or principles of humanism that influence his theory of love.

2.3.2 Instinctive affection vs. deliberate emotional engagement

2.3.2.1 Instinctive Affection. Instinctive affection can be interpreted as the reaction that occurs spontaneously, such as attraction or liking for a person when they are attractive to us. That is, an emotion that appears and disappears at a given moment without involving any value that leads to a specific decision. Falling in love or having sex are instinctive affections, something that passes.

2.3.2.2 Deliberate Emotional Engagement. Deliberate emotional commitment, or rather, the willingness to make conscious decisions to build a relationship, is where true, authentic love emerges. Responsibility, commitment, and effort are fundamental human values

that should be the foundation of any kind of love, and unquestionably of what or whom one is loving. Furthermore, this love must be free and maintain the individuality of each being, avoiding attachment or dependence at all costs.

2.3.3 Fundamental values of love according to Fromm

This section on core values is one of the most important because they constitute the ethical and psychological core of both work and the psychologically focused literary analysis. The core values, closely linked to humanism, are described as fundamental and necessary for the five types of love mentioned in this thesis. Through these values, the four essential elements that constitute mature love, mentioned by Fromm, emerge. In this sense, the moral principles that must be present when cultivating love are the following: respect, responsibility, care, and knowledge.

2.3.3.1 Respect. Respect is a fundamental value in any type of relationship between human beings. Fromm (1959) mentions “la capacidad de ver a una persona tal cual es, tener conciencia de su individualidad única” (p. 46). He explains that the art of cultivating love requires the ability to see and accept the other person as they are, recognizing their individuality and freedom. Respect means recognizing that the other person is a distinct being, with their own thoughts, decisions, and paths, and allowing them to grow without trying to mold them in our image or according to our expectations.

Respect for another person involves accepting their autonomy, thus fostering their process of self-realization. It's not about imposing our will, but rather about supporting the other person in their development, understanding that love doesn't mean possessing or controlling. In Fromm's words, authentic love doesn't seek to dominate or change, but rather to understand and support.

Within true love, there is no room for control or manipulation. When we love from a place of respect, we recognize the other's freedom as a sacred value. This kind of love doesn't limit or confine but rather fosters mutual growth and genuine connection. To love with respect is to allow

the other to be fully themselves, and in doing so, both are enriched in their relationship, building a bond based on freedom, trust, and acceptance.

2.3.3.2 Responsibility. Within love, responsibility should not be understood as a burden or an imposed obligation. Fromm (1959) considers “la responsabilidad en su verdadero sentido, es un acto enteramente voluntario constituye mi respuesta a las necesidades expresadas o no, de otro ser humano” (p. 45). Just as Fromm suggests, true responsibility arises freely and voluntarily, as an expression of a conscious commitment to the well-being of others. Loving implies taking responsibility not out of duty, but out of choice, because one recognizes in the other person a value one wishes to nurture and protect.

Being responsible in love means being attentive to the needs of others and acting sensitively toward them. It means weighing one's actions, words, and decisions, understanding how they can positively or negatively affect the person they love. This responsibility is not based on blame or control, but on empathy and a deep understanding of the bond.

Fromm argues that mature love is manifested precisely in this voluntary responsibility: caring for the other without nullifying them, accompanying them without invading them, and consciously responding to their well-being and personal growth. When responsibility is born from authentic love, it strengthens the relationship and transforms it into a space of trust, respect, and mutual support.

2.3.3.3 Caring. Caring involves genuine concern for the other person's well-being. Fromm (1959) considers that “el amor es la preocupación activa por la vida y el crecimiento de lo que amamos” (p. 44). According to Erich Fromm, caring is an essential manifestation of mature love, since those who truly love cannot remain without concern for the needs of others. Caring is not based on possession or control, but on a genuine interest in seeing the loved one happy, fulfilled, and growing.

Caring means being present, attending to, and protecting without impeding the freedom of others, as a mother does with her child or when she waters her plants and flowers. It is an

active act that demonstrates responsibility, respect, and emotional commitment. Fromm argues that love without care loses its meaning, since those who love naturally care for others without expecting a reward. This genuine concern is born of empathy and the desire for others to develop in conditions that allow them to achieve self-realization.

Seeing another human being well, feeling part of their growth, and contributing to their emotional and spiritual well-being are true expressions of caring. Loving, in this sense, is not just a feeling, but a constant practice of attention and dedication to the other, which strengthens the bond and allows both to evolve together in freedom.

2.3.3.4 Knowledge. Fromm (1959) considers that “hay muchos niveles de conocimiento; el que constituye un aspecto del amor no se detiene en la periferia, sino que penetra hasta el meollo” (p. 47). Knowledge is what allows us to truly understand another human being and overcome the superficiality of physical contact or appearance. According to Erich Fromm, knowing another person involves looking beyond the visible and penetrating their inner essence, understanding their emotions, fears, desires, and ways of seeing the world. This knowledge is not achieved through distant observation, but through empathy, active listening, and deep emotional connection.

Fromm clarifies in *El Arte de Amar* that one cannot love what one does not know, since genuine love requires understanding and awareness of the loved one as they are, not as we imagine them. Without knowledge, love becomes a projection of our own needs or idealizations, built on illusions and false mental ideas.

Knowing the other, then, is an act of openness and humility: it involves setting aside prejudices and being willing to discover the real human being, with their complexity and authenticity. Only when one truly knows oneself does love become solid, conscious, and free of idealizations, allowing for a deeper and more human relationship.

2.4 Criticism of the consumerist view of modern love

In contemporary times, consumer love is in fashion. People believe that love is an object that can be exchanged for another product. Modern man is interested in everything that generates utility; with that characteristic, he possibly considers himself worthy of being happy. Consumerism within love creates superficial bonds that move away from the true meaning of the bond of authentic love. Various individuals believe that another person can provide them with security and pleasure as would a product or object that they can acquire; for this reason, they confuse what is truly valuable and essential. Fromm (1959) argued “el carácter mercantil está dispuesto a dar, pero solo a cambio de recibir; para él, dar sin recibir significa una estafa” (p. 39). Commercial love is based on receiving, not giving. Just like in business, you should only give if you receive something in return; otherwise, you're a loser. In contrast to mature love, love is about giving and genuinely giving of yourself to cultivate genuine bonds.

2.4.1 Love as an object within human psychology. Within modern human psychology and its vision of love, it is considered an object. Gaber (2024) points out, “Love, marriage, death, and the human condition at large are conceived as mere commodities whose value is estimated according to their material worth and, hence, lose their inherent human depth and become dehumanized” (abstract). An object that we can acquire, replace, handle, or consume as we please, based on personal pleasure. This modern perspective and vision distance true love from its profound human nature. People today believe they are deeply connected, yet they live disconnected from themselves and even disconnected from reality. When love ceases to be an object, people can fully experience the true bond of love.

2.4.2 Love as a Passive Experience. This current section on love as a passive, not active, experience is one of the core sections. It has been believed that love arises effortlessly, indicating that it is perceived as something that requires no action or will. Furthermore, in passive experiences, the other person is expected to be the giver and the deliverer, with us merely being the recipients of the other individual's will or intentions. Consequently, by not

actively participating in the building of the bond, it ceases to be a genuine and mutual experience. This belief, which considers love as something that simply happens, is why it is believed to require no effort. To build a true loving bond, one must work and practice love as if it were an art. In this way, true love, being a conscious decision and daily practice, becomes active, not passive, like an art.

2.5 Psychological Models of Love

In reviewing Fromm's theory, various positions of other authors are identified whose ideas coincide or intersect with his approaches. To do so, it is necessary to clarify the central concepts and ideas that underpin these theories. Conceptual clarification and comparison between authors establish the foundation for a literary analysis of *El Arte de Amar*. Likewise, the study of the main theoretical background of this thesis contributes to understanding its psychological purpose within the field of romantic relationships.

2.6 Components of the Triangular Theory

The first research article was developed based on the theories of Robert Sternberg. This academic article by Sternberg reviews the triangular theory of love. The triangular theory of love is based on the three main elements that make up romantic relationships.

2.6.1 Intimacy. As stated by Almeida (n.d.), within the triangular theory of love, intimacy is defined as everything that creates a bond with another person and relates to what fosters that connection. Psychologically speaking, intimacy is capable of building positive emotional feelings toward the other person. Actions to achieve these feelings include seeking well-being, happiness, respect, and emotional security, among others mentioned in the theory. This concept corresponds to Fromm's theory, which promotes well-being, respect, and, above all, the creation of deep, not merely superficial, bonds. Furthermore, it corresponds to the idea of autonomy, which equally fits with Fromm's freedom and independence.

2.6.2 Passion. As stated by Almeida (n.d.), Passion primarily refers to the intense desire to be united with one's partner. However, its connection to sexuality is less central and does not

always involve physical contact. This feeling is associated with what is known as "love at first sight" and represents a state characterized by a strong longing for union with another, generated by both mental and physical arousal. A romantic relationship begins with this intense infatuation, along with sexual intimacy, and is distinguished from other types of love, such as parental love, filial love, or friendship, in which affection, caring, and commitment predominate.

2.6.3 Commitment. Although Sternberg points out that the decision-making component of love, along with the commitment, operates in two temporal dimensions: short-term and long-term, both are essential. In the short term, commitment consists of the initial decision to love the other person; in the long term, it involves maintaining that choice over time, working to sustain and preserve love. In this sense, a decision without prolonged maintenance may lack stability, while a long-term commitment without a basis for conscious decision-making may lose its original intention.

2.7 Similarities with Fromm

Comparing the similarities between Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar* and Robert Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love constitutes a complementary exercise that allows us to understand, from a psychological perspective, the diverse ways in which human love manifests and is explained. Both theories, although developed in different contexts, agree in conceiving love as a complex experience that integrates emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components. The following is a comparative analysis that delves into the fundamental convergences between both perspectives, highlighting how each provides a comprehensive and dynamic vision of the phenomenon of love.

2.7.1 Similarities. Although both theories start from different perspectives, Fromm, with his humanistic philosophical vision, and Sternberg, from a psychological perspective, both agree on the necessary foundations for a mature and true bond.

Fromm proposes love as an art that requires effort and discipline, which implies commitment. The act of loving is not just a feeling, but a construction built with care, respect,

knowledge, and responsibility. In other words, Almeida, who analyzes the triangular theory of love, mentions that love is a developmental process. They relate, connecting both perspectives from the point of view of construction through the bond itself. One of their greatest convergences relates to the concept of commitment. For both, commitment is one of the foundations. Commitment is an active decision that is responsible for maintaining the decision to love another person. For both authors, constant action is fundamental. For Fromm, commitment is a voluntary and conscious response to the needs of the other; for Sternberg, commitment is a rational decision to maintain the bond.

For both Fromm and Sternberg, love should be an experience of personal growth. Fromm argues that mature love helps humans overcome isolation and integrate into society with other human beings through love. Sternberg says that relationships that possess an emotional connection contribute to mutually strengthening identity and mental well-being.

Both authors propose that true love can only occur between two people capable of giving and receiving. Although Fromm emphasizes that to love is to give without expecting anything in return, for Sternberg, self-giving occurs through intimacy. However, in both cases, some kind of self-giving is reflected, which is characteristic of genuine love.

Although they explain their concepts differently, they both agree that love is a deep connection that requires two people committed to creating and maintaining a bond, not something magical that happens without any commitment or effort. They both agree that the act of love is balanced between emotionality, reason, and active action.

2.8 Ahmad Ramsés Barragán's Cognitive-Emotional Theory

This theoretical article proposes central ideas about the meaning of love, or what it truly is. It then contrasts certain concepts that coincide with concepts that Fromm supports and others that he rejects within the definition of the act of loving or love.

2.8.1 Love as emotion vs. intentional construction

Love as an emotion cannot be a concept that fully defines the meaning, since it is difficult to maintain a complete definition for a complex psychological aspect such as love. According to Pieters et al. (1988), "The duration of an emotion is often shorter than the duration of a mood" (p. 4). This indicates that emotions tend to be short-lived and fleeting, even compared to a state of mind. If love is defined as an emotion, it circumvents the concepts of commitment and the complexities it encompasses. Furthermore, an emotion is limited, which is interpreted as something brief and fleeting.

Otherwise, the article's analysis points to love as an intentional construction, since it doesn't define love as something temporary; the author seeks to find lasting terms for its definition. In the definition of intentional construction, the author decides to use a term he considers distinct from emotion and replaces it with a state of mind. He believes that a state of mind includes stability and continuity. He implies that this state of mind must be built, maintained, and nurtured. This perception relates to the concept of creating from the rational, rather than the spontaneous.

2.8.2 Approach to love as psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is not separate from love; they should grow together. As Barragán (2025) suggests, love can be understood as a state of mind characterized by a positive attitude and a close connection with personal and relational well-being. Unlike fleeting emotions, this state has greater stability and a broader influence on behavior and emotional health. Love must consider maintaining a positive outlook. Love is considered to produce psychological well-being, which leads to stability, self-esteem, and emotional health, when it directs emotions in a way that seeks connection with other individuals.

2.8.3 Agreement with Fromm: love as something that is constructed. Love is not something that simply happens; for Fromm, love is something that is built, and for Barragan, a lasting state of mind. Although both are defined in different and arguably opposing terms, it is

argued that both views of love focus on the concept of stability and determination. In both approaches, love is conceived as an active process that is built through ongoing attitudes, choices, and behaviors.

2.9 Considerations of Clinical Psychological Article: Love Addiction, Adult Attachment Patterns, and Self-Esteem

Self-esteem and attachment patterns, especially in adulthood, influence love addiction. Gori et al. (2023) explain, “Results showed significant and positive associations between preoccupied and fearful adult attachment and love addiction. Furthermore, these relationships were totally mediated by self-esteem” (abstract). Three psychological links are presented: love addiction, considered one of the modern addictions, attachment, and self-esteem. People with low self-esteem tend to develop insecure attachments in adulthood, which leads to emotional dependence.

2. 9. 1 Addictive love and emotional dependence. Love addiction is a form of emotional dependence in which a person suffering from emotional dependence excessively requires affection and attention, basically needing the presence of their partner. Those who develop this dependence often experience a fear of being alone, anxiety, and obsession. Gori et al. (2023) mention that “individuals with higher levels of fearful or preoccupied attachment, characterized by a negative self-view, tend to show lower levels of self-esteem, which can result in dysfunctional relational modalities characterized by an excessive dependence on the partner” (p. 8).

Dependent people in relationships are people with low self-esteem who seek security and value from others that they cannot provide themselves. Gori et al. (2023) explains “The love addicted subject often feels inadequate, unworthy of love, and lives in constant fear of being abandoned by his partner” (p. 1). People with insecure attachment development, especially anxious attachment, tend to develop love addiction because they are afraid of abandonment, thus remaining within the relationship for constant reassurance.

2.9.2 Relationship with Fromm's critique of the loss of freedom in dependent relationships. This article's connection to Fromm's idea is very apt; the same idea addresses the loss of freedom in dependent relationships. People tend to confuse love with dependency. When a relationship is based on or presents the characteristic that the person belongs to me or I belong to them, each individual loses individual freedom. Authentic love can only develop between free people who have overcome isolation.

The article mentions that people with low self-esteem and insecure attachments develop love addiction. When love addiction occurs, freedom is lost, especially emotional freedom. These people are emotionally dependent on the other person, not on themselves. Therefore, emotional dependence is not true love; it is a way of giving up personal freedom to another person, seeking security and acceptance. Only a person with solid self-esteem and individuality is capable of creating mature and authentic loving bonds completely free of dependency.

2. 10 Lee's and Katyayani's theories under "Love Style Theories"

Attachment styles, or the way people relate to others, influence how they experience love. There are three types of attachment: secure, anxious, and avoidant. Secure attachment is characterized by self-reliance and independence. Katyayani (2024) indicates that "individuals who feel more secure in their relationships may place greater emphasis on emotional intimacy, trust, and stability rather than purely physical or intense passionate romantic aspects of love." (p. 11). People with secure attachment are capable of building genuine loving bonds.

Katyayani (2024) indicates that "individuals with an anxious attachment style typically experience fear of abandonment and insecurity in their relationships, leading them to seek constant reassurance and validation from their partners" (p. 11). Anxious attachment, on the other hand, is characterized by a fear of abandonment, a need for validation from others, and a need for affection. People with secure attachment have healthy, committed, and balanced relationships. Conversely, people with insecure attachment have difficulty forming relationships because they easily become dependent.

2. 10. 1 Comparison with the types of love proposed by Fromm. This article supports Fromm's ideas regarding love. Certain attachment styles, such as anxious attachment, have been shown to create unfavorable conditions for building true and stable bonds, far from fostering genuine love. Anxious attachment is consistent with an immature love based on need, not freedom or choice. Possessive, anxious, or dependent love is not authentic love.

Not everything known or labeled as love is true love. Both embrace the concept of mature and immature forms of love. Both works agree that dependency is not part of a true form of authentic love.

2. 11 Investigation of Mariam Fernández Castro

Among the population, particularly among young people, certain traditional beliefs about love still persist. Although it is believed that young people have forgotten or no longer practice certain beliefs, the reality is different. Some perceptions reached a high level of agreement. Certain beliefs about love can play a role in normalizing or encouraging violence in intimate relationships in the current context.

2.11.1 Romantic beliefs among young university students. True love conquers all is the first belief young people agree on. This belief idealizes love as a force capable of achieving anything. As Fernández (2021) demonstrates, the most prevalent beliefs about love consist of believing that love can overcome any problem or inconsistency that arises. Within this belief, it is considered that love forgives all, a belief still held among young people; it involves justifying any behavior of the other individual.

As explained by Fernández (2021), the belief that love is predestined for each person, or the popular theory among society of the "better half," has a consideration percentage between 35 and 47 percent. It is usually related to the idea of perfect love.

Fernández (2021) explains that jealousy as a form of love is rejected by a large portion of the student population. This rejection of the belief is an important step toward emotionally healthier relationships.

2. 12 Contemporary Relevance of Fromm's Theory of Love

Erich Fromm's critique remains highly relevant in contemporary society. His theory addresses essential human dimensions that remain relevant within society. Erich Fromm's critique remains profoundly relevant in contemporary society, as his reflections address essential dimensions of the human condition that transcend time and remain relevant in current social contexts. Fromm questioned modern forms of alienation, consumerism, and the loss of authenticity in human relationships, pointing out how social and economic structures can distort human beings' capacity for genuine love and relationships.

His theory of love as a conscious, mature, and responsible act beyond simple desire or possession is especially significant in an era marked by emotional superficiality, digital immediacy, and the instrumentalization of emotional bonds. Furthermore, his humanist thought proposes an ethical and existential alternative to the individualism and dehumanization that characterize much of modern life.

In this sense, Fromm's work not only maintains its theoretical value but also offers critical tools for rethinking interpersonal relationships, the meaning of freedom, and the search for authenticity in today's society.

2. 13 Criticism of the superficiality of love in the digital age

Within the work, the author's ideas are accurately anticipated. The author did not write directly about social media or the digital age. However, Fromm's critique of consumer society has been transcendent. In the current context, the consumption of products doesn't mean physical products; it means digital products. Social media and dating apps are examples of consumerism. Social media and dating apps are predetermined sites similar to supermarket shelves: people want a "product," observe it, and select or discard it based on its appearance as a commodity.

2. 13. 1 Digital intimacy. Piras & Miele (2019) argue that "By digital intimacy, we mean relationships characterized by a thorough familiarity made possible, sustained or reinforced

through electronic devices by means of both data sharing and personal communication” (p. 117). Digital intimacy can be interpreted as the closeness that occurs between users of a social network or app. This closeness is much more distant than one might think. Connections on social media are superficial and detached from reality. People believe they meet another person through these sites; however, within the context of love, getting to know a person deeply and genuinely and breaking down the barrier of intimacy has no relation to meeting them physically.

2. 13. 2 Emotional Superficiality. Emotional superficiality refers to the emotions an individual currently experiences when comparing love with concepts that are actually far removed from true love. If the term "emotional superficiality" is broken down, it's worth understanding. According to vocabulary.com, "lack of depth of knowledge or thought or feeling" is the concept of superficiality. The term "emotional" refers to everything related to the mind and its emotions. Combining both concepts, we understand the intended meaning. Today, feelings are based on fleeting emotions; people don't delve deeper into what's truly human because they don't consider stability or firm decisions; they don't find a reason to do so.

2. 12 The relevance of Fromm's thinking to current emotional challenges

Erich Fromm's thinking is completely applicable and relevant to contemporary society. His reflections on alienation, the loss of human meaning, and inner disconnection find echoes in modern life. Today, many people experience profound isolation, not only from others but also from themselves. Modern human beings seem to live separated from their own essence, disconnected from the people around them and the nature that sustains them.

Today, the paradox of digital connectivity becomes evident: the more individuals "connect" to technological devices, the more they disconnect from their internal and emotional reality. A screen-mediated life replaces genuine human contact with superficial interactions, weakening emotional bonds and empathy. This progressive disconnection can lead to feelings of emptiness, loneliness, and an increase in mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression.

In this context, Fromm's warnings about the need to reconnect with oneself, with others, and with nature take on renewed meaning. His thinking invites us to recover the authenticity of love, conscious presence, and the ability to relate humanely in a world increasingly dominated by technology and haste.

2. 12. 1 Difficulty building lasting bonds. Disconnection from other beings and from us makes it difficult to understand others and create lasting bonds. This disconnection from humanity and connection with the digital world causes people to associate relationships like love with the immediacy of technology, which is far removed from reality. With the immediacy and speed of technology and modernization, romantic relationships become transient. Human beings become incapable of commitment and discipline because they believe that love requires neither commitment nor discipline. This decision results in transient bonds.

2. 12. 2 Loss of Authenticity. According to Erich Fromm, the fear of freedom inevitably leads to a loss of authenticity. In a society dominated by appearances, fashions, and imposed trends, many people prefer to adapt to what their environment dictates rather than risk being themselves. This need to belong is deeply rooted in human beings and ends up replacing true freedom with an apparent freedom, where personal decisions are conditioned by social approval.

Modern individuals often construct their identity based on external models, guided by what others expect or value. Thus, the ability to act from one's own essence is diluted, and acceptance is prioritized over authenticity. This loss of contact with oneself also impacts romantic relationships: when one lives from adaptation rather than authenticity, bonds become superficial, fragile, and dependent. Only those who know and accept themselves can relate to others from a place of freedom rather than need.

Lack of Self-Love. Self-love, understood as respect, care, and acceptance of oneself, constitutes the foundation of any form of genuine love for others. Fromm affirmed that love for

others is only possible when there is love for oneself; without this inner root, every attempt at love becomes a search for approval or to fill emotional voids.

However, today, self-love has become one of the greatest challenges facing human beings. We live in a culture that promotes self-demand, constant comparison, and evaluation through external factors: appearance, success, or popularity. This context makes it difficult to build a healthy relationship with oneself, as individuals become disconnected from their inner worth and focus on meeting the expectations of others.

Rebuilding self-love involves regaining respect for one's own history, taking care of one's body and mind, accepting imperfections, and recognizing oneself as a person worthy of love, without depending on the gaze of others. Only through this self-understanding and self-acceptance is it possible to establish authentic, balanced emotional bonds free from the fear of loneliness or rejection.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Every research project requires a methodological framework to carry out the research. McMeekin et al. (2020) define “methodological framework provides structured practical guidance or a tool to guide the user through a process, using stages or a step-by-step approach” (p. 2). The purpose of this methodological framework is precisely to explain how the research will be conducted. The objective of this methodological framework is to help students identify the steps to follow in developing their research project.

3.1 Research approach

The research approach guides how this research is conducted. There are several approaches to conducting research according to the needs required for its development. Among the most common approaches are those listed below: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. Each approach will be defined below.

3.1.1 Qualitative approach. According to Taherdoost (2022) “Qualitative research aims to collect primary, first-hand, textual data and analyze it using specific interpretive methods.” (p. 54). The qualitative approach focuses on understanding meanings, experiences, and perceptions. It does not seek to quantify numerical data; instead, it requires a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.

3.1.2 Quantitative approach. The quantitative approach, unlike the qualitative approach, is based on numerical data and measurements, seeks to test hypotheses, and by its nature uses statistics and experiments to carry out and achieve its purpose. According to Taherdoost (2022), “Quantitative research is the method of employing numerical values derived from observations to explain and describe the phenomena that the observations can reflect on them” (p. 54). Numerical data derived from experiments and observations are used.

3.1.3 Mixed approach. The mixed approach combines both qualitative and quantitative elements. Taherdoost (2022) explains, “Mixed-method methods simply employ a combination of

both qualitative and quantitative approaches based on the purpose of the study and the nature of the research question, aiming to provide a better understanding of the subject” (p. 55). Due to its description, this mixed approach allows a more complete view of the problem.

This paper will adopt a qualitative approach because it requires studying the phenomenon, which in this case corresponds to love, and requires understanding meanings, making observations, and analyzing content. This approach will allow us to seek out and explore the psychological concepts underlying Erich Fromm's work *El Arte de Amar*. The qualitative method is appropriate, as the study focuses on understanding meanings, ideas about characteristics, and psychological foundations of the act of love, rather than measuring variables or testing hypotheses.

This approach allows the student/researcher to examine Fromm's discourse on love, freedom, and human relationships from a psychological perspective, prioritizing the interpretation of concepts, theoretical perspectives, and analysis of other authors. Through qualitative analysis, the author's main ideas about human nature and emotional development can be identified, allowing for a deeper and more complete understanding of the text.

3.2 Research design

This section is the most important part of the work, as it is the strategy that will guide the research. This section will describe how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted to answer the questions or test the hypotheses of the study. For this analysis, two research designs will be used: descriptive and analytical. The descriptive design allows or aims to identify and describe the main themes, ideas, and concepts present in the work, especially those related to the nature of love, freedom, emotional maturity, and human relationships, according to Fromm. The analytical design allows for analysis, seeks to examine, and interpret how these concepts are articulated within the author's psychological thinking, analyzing the causes, implications, and meanings that emerge from his discourse.

3.3 Type of research

This research adopts a qualitative hermeneutic approach. The hermeneutic method is used to interpret and analyze Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar*, seeking to understand the meanings, concepts, and philosophical reflections the author expresses. This approach allows for a deep understanding of the concept of love in relation to its ethical, social, and, above all, psychological dimensions. Through interpretation and critical reflection, the aim is to relate Fromm's ideas to contemporary theories on love and human relationships.

Habsy (2020) defines "is one type of qualitative research aimed at understanding and interpreting literalism in depth and making appropriate articulation as the capture and interpretation of meanings based on the elements, as well as understanding the elements based on the overall meaning" (abstract). This research uses the hermeneutic method, understood as a qualitative approach that seeks to understand and interpret the meaning of Erich Fromm's work, *El Arte de Amar*. This method allows us to analyze the author's ideas, considering their philosophical and social context, and to relate them to contemporary theories of love.

3.4 Sources Information

Information sources are the materials, documents, or resources used to obtain the data, ideas, and theoretical foundations necessary to develop this present work. There are three types of information sources: primary, secondary, and tertiary or optional sources. These sources will be essential to support the analysis. In this analysis, it is necessary to use all three types of sources to support the study from a theoretical, critical, and contextual perspective.

Primary sources are the original, direct materials that constitute the main object of study. In literary and psychological research, primary sources are the texts that directly contain the ideas, concepts, or statements to be analyzed. In this case, the primary source is Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar*, first published in 1956. This text constitutes the core of the analysis, as it develops the author's reflection on love as a conscious, mature, and ethical act, linked to freedom and personal development. Based on this work, we will examine the psychological

concepts Fromm proposes, such as emotional maturity, individuality, responsibility, and unity, and how these are integrated into his humanistic vision of love.

Secondary sources are those that interpret, explain, or expand on the information contained in the primary source. They serve to understand the historical, philosophical, and psychological context of the work and also support the critical interpretation and consensus-building carried out by the researcher/student. In this research, the secondary sources correspond to:

- A historical overview of Fromm's life and work, which will facilitate an understanding of the relationship between his personal experience, his psychoanalytic training, and his vision of love.
- A social context of the work, *El Arte de Amar*, which will explain his concepts of love and its characteristics.
- Online dictionaries that define terms within the work.
- Works, primarily articles by other psychological or philosophical authors focused on love, whose theories influenced Fromm or are comparable to his thinking, such as the following.

Las ideas del amor de R.J. Sternberg: la teoría triangular y la teoría narrativa del amor R.J. Sternberg's ideas on love by Alba Almeida. In this article, Eleno analyzes the main theories of love proposed by American psychologist Robert J. Sternberg. The author explains how this theory helps us understand the complexity and diversity of human romantic relationships.

Within this work, this article provides a psychological view of love, consistent with Fromm's theory. Sternberg's theories allow us to analyze love as a complex phenomenon, with components such as intimacy, passion, and commitment that can be applied to the characters or ideas in the text.

DEFINIENDO EL AMOR MÁS ALLÁ DE UNA EMOCIÓN: FUNCIONES Y CARACTERÍSTICAS EN TORNO AL BIENESTAR by Ahmad Ramsés Barragán Estrada. This

theoretical article proposes a comprehensive view of love, understood beyond a simple passing emotion. It argues that love should be viewed as a complex and multidimensional process that fulfills important psychological, social, and existential functions in human life.

Ahmad Ramsés Barragán Estrada's text is relevant to this literary analysis, as it complements Erich Fromm's vision by defining love as an active process that contributes to personal and social well-being. His psychological approach allows us to interpret *El Arte de Amar* from a contemporary perspective, highlighting that love, beyond being an emotion, is a practice that implies responsibility, growth, and emotional balance. In this way, Barragán's work supports Fromm's interpretation of love, demonstrating its relevance in the current context.

Love Addiction, Adult Attachment Patterns and Self-Esteem: Testing for Mediation Using Path Analysis by Alessio Gori, Ruso, and Topino. This study by these authors is relevant to this literary analysis, as it offers a contemporary psychological perspective on love addiction and attachment patterns. Its empirical findings allow us to contrast the notion of dependent love with the mature love proposed by Erich Fromm in *El Arte de Amar*. While Fromm understands love as a manifestation of freedom and personal growth, Gori and his colleagues demonstrate that low self-esteem and insecure attachments can distort this ideal, turning love into a form of emotional dependence. In this way, current research supports and updates Fromm's humanistic ideas, providing a scientific basis for his literary and philosophical reflection on love.

Influence of Attachment Styles on Intimacy and Love Styles by psychology student Komal Katyayani. This study investigates how attachment styles developed in childhood influence how adults experience intimacy and love. Its purpose is to understand why people love differently and how these patterns affect the quality of their relationships.

Komal Katyayani's study is relevant to this literary analysis because it offers a contemporary psychological perspective that complements Erich Fromm's ideas in *El Arte de Amar*. Her research on attachment styles and forms of love demonstrates that the ability to establish healthy intimate bonds depends on emotional security and affective maturity, aspects

that Fromm already identified as essential for true love. In this way, Katyayani's work provides empirical support for Fromm's humanistic vision, enriching the interpretation of love as a conscious practice that promotes personal and relational growth.

Creencias del amor romántico: grado de acuerdo hacia las mismas y diferencias según género, en estudiantes adolescentes que asisten a la Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente, by Mariam Fernández Castro This is a final thesis for a bachelor's degree in psychology. The study analyzes the beliefs college students hold about romantic love, the beliefs they still hold, and how these can influence their emotional relationships.

Mariam Fernández Castro's study is relevant to this literary analysis because it provides a contemporary empirical perspective on beliefs about romantic love, which continue to influence current relationships. Her research supports the critique Erich Fromm raises in *El Arte de Amar* regarding the idealization of love and the confusion between true love and emotional dependence. By showing that young people still reproduce romantic myths, the work allows Fromm's reflection to be updated and contextualized. It contrasts with Fromm's theory, which states that society needs to understand love as a mature, free, and conscious act.

All of these sources will serve to establish connections and contrasts in the analysis. The use of secondary sources will place the text within a solid theoretical framework and will facilitate a deeper and more grounded interpretation.

Finally, tertiary sources do not offer direct information on the topic; however, they facilitate access to or the location of primary and secondary sources.

In this study, tertiary sources include:

- Academic databases and digital repositories from different universities that allow you to locate articles and books that address the topic of love from a psychological perspective.
- Journals from associations or institutions.
- Google Scholar

3.5 Data collection instrument

A data collection instrument is fundamental for indicating and specifying the means by which information is gathered for the next chapter of this thesis. Furthermore, it organizes the information on the research problem. It is designed to obtain and record specific information. The relevance of a data collection instrument lies in its ability to obtain clear, precise, and pertinent information, which contributes to the development of the thesis with greater clarity and reliability. This, in turn, allows us to answer the research questions and solve the problem presented by the research.

In this work, the data collection instrument will consist of tables. These tables will organize the information according to each specific objective stated at the beginning of the work. Each table has three columns corresponding to each specific objective. The first table is associated with the first specific objective, which is to identify psychological principles and values. The first column of this table includes principles and values expressed in the book; the second column includes a quote from the book *El Arte de Amar* that illustrates the value and principle. Finally, the third column includes an explanation of the critical viewpoint, both personal and that of other authors and works.

The second table relates to the specific objective number two. The first column focuses on how the author examines and conceptualizes love. The second column includes how this is observed in the book, and the third explains the reasoning behind why love is a learned skill.

The third table has the same number of columns. Unlike the previous ones, this table will present psychological theories and models from other authors in relation to Erich Fromm's work. The first column shows Fromm's approach, the second column shows the similarities with other approaches, and the last column presents approaches that are opposed to Fromm's.

3.5.1 Table 1 based on the specific Objective number one

<i>Identify the psychological principles and values.</i>		
Principles and Values	Illustrative quote	The student's point of view and that of other authors.
Freedom		

3.5.2 Table 2 based on the specific Objective number two

<i>Love as a skill.</i>		
Conceptualization of Love	Example	Justification

3.5.3 Table 3 based on the specific Objective number three

<i>Psychological theories and approaches.</i>		
Fromm's Approach / Theory	Similarities with other approaches	Different Approaches

3.5.4 Themes, motifs and symbols

The book *El Arte de Amar*, written by psychoanalyst and philosopher Erich Fromm, analyzes and conceptualizes love from a psychological and social perspective. Fromm argues that love is not a spontaneous feeling but rather a skill, like any other. Throughout the work, themes, motifs, and symbols are identified that are linked to its central theme. Within the chapters, he develops topics such as love itself, the central theme, freedom, mature love, materialism in modern society, and individuality.

Furthermore, although few in number, the motifs are present throughout the book. These motifs include love as a discipline that must be practiced, love as giving rather than receiving, and human separateness. Additionally, the symbols used in the work include art, marketing, milk and honey, apple-bottle-breast, equipment, recipes, open-mouthed consumers, zombies, and concentration. All of these represent a certain depth that can be understood through their context. Consequently, the following tables show the themes, motifs, and symbols with their explanation and context within the book or a quote from the author where the aforementioned is exemplified.

3.5.5 Table 1 themes

<i>Themes</i>		
Theme	Topic Description	How it develops within the work.

3.5.6 Table 2 motifs

<i>Motifs</i>		
Motif	Description of the motifs	How it is repeated in the work

3.5.7 Table 3 symbols

<i>Symbols</i>		
Symbol	Literal meaning	Explanation in the work

3.6 Categories of analysis

The following analytical categories were established based on the main research question, theoretical framework, and the conceptual dimensions identified within the primary text. Each category functions as an interpretative axis that enables the exploration of the author's perspectives and the philosophical meanings expressed throughout the work.

Together, they provide a coherent structure for the hermeneutic interpretation developed in this literary analysis study.

3.6.1 Love as Art and Practice

Fromm conceives love as a voluntary and conscious act, not as a passive or spontaneous emotion. Loving implies an active decision that requires learning, commitment, and responsibility, similar to the process of mastering an art. This practice demands three essential qualities: discipline, understood as perseverance and the effort to sustain the bond beyond the initial emotion; concentration, as the capacity for full attention and presence toward the other; and patience, which recognizes the gradual and evolving nature of love. Together, these dimensions show that loving, according to Fromm, is an ethical and creative activity, the result of a conscious and sustained practice, and not simply a passing emotional state.

3.7 Types of Love and Their Psychological Function

Fromm distinguishes five types of love, each with a specific psychological function in human development. Brotherly love represents the foundation of all emotional relationships, as it promotes empathy, solidarity, and a sense of connection with others, strengthening social integration. Maternal love serves a function of security and unconditional acceptance, essential for the development of basic trust. Erotic love seeks total fusion with another being, integrating the sexual and emotional dimensions and allowing for the expression of intimacy and the desire for union.

Self-love constitutes the condition for loving others, as it implies respect, care, and self-acceptance, avoiding self-denial or narcissism. Finally, the love of God expresses the human need for transcendence and connection with a higher sense of meaning, functioning as a source of spiritual guidance and stability. Together, these forms of love shape a psychological structure that sustains emotional maturity and personal fulfillment.

3.7.1 Love and Mental Health

According to Fromm, authentic love is a fundamental indicator of emotional maturity, as it implies the ability to give affection and care without the immediate expectation of receiving something in return, as well as a deep respect for the individuality and autonomy of the other.

This form of love requires an internal balance that allows for the establishment of relationships based on reciprocity, trust, and freedom, which contributes significantly to psychological well-being. Conversely, the inability to love authentically is often linked to narcissistic disorders, where self-absorption and a lack of empathy predominate; emotional dependence, characterized by an excessive need for approval and fear of loneliness; and emotional insecurity, which makes it difficult to build stable and healthy bonds. Thus, the quality of love a person is able to offer and receive directly reflects their mental health and emotional development.

3.7.2 Love in Modern Society

Erich Fromm strongly criticizes the commercial view of love, in which people are treated as commodities to be "sold" or "bought" in an emotional market. This perspective reduces human relationships to superficial exchanges based on interest, appearance, or immediate satisfaction, stripping love of its ethical and profound dimension. Fromm points out that consumer culture, with its emphasis on speed, constant novelty, and instant gratification, fosters a way of relating marked by superficiality and a lack of commitment.

In this context, love becomes a disposable product, subject to the logic of personal gain and competition, which hinders the development of authentic, lasting bonds based on empathy, responsibility, and mutual respect. In this way, the commodification of love contributes to emotional alienation and the fragmentation of human relationships, impeding the experience of love as a conscious and transformative practice.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data analysis, which consists of analyzing the theories established previously in Chapter 2. Its importance lies in the fact that the previous information is converted into data and useful knowledge. It also answers the research question by connecting the collected data with the respective research objectives. This research is based on a work that integrates a psychological-humanistic theme. To analyze this work, we use a triangulation between the literary work, the opinions of experts on the subject, and the analysis of the student, who is the researcher. This leads to an integration of approaches that concludes with a single theory at the end of the research.

4.1 Approaches to the investigation: Definition of approach and relationship between book and main approach selected

The focus of this study is psychological, as it aims to analyze the concept of love from a psychological-humanistic perspective. Since the main theme of the work is love from an artistic point of view, a psychological approach is sought that explains why love is an art and not a spontaneous feeling or emotion. It seeks to interpret and give psychological meaning to Fromm's theory, viewed from a psychoanalytic and humanistic point of view. In addition, it focuses on the psychology of Fromm's thinking in comparison with modern psychology and perspectives on what love is.

The main relationship between the selected work and the focus of this thesis is based on the idea that love depends on a mature emotional level. The book explains how love is independent and free, which is deeply related to psychology, with topics such as emotional dependence, emotional maturity, and psychological well-being. The work relates the idea of how modern society interprets love as a commodity, which is psychologically related to how people view love according to the current cultural context in which they live. In general, the entire work

discusses different types of love, all of which connect with emotionally mature and reasonable human psychological processes.

4.2 Theories vs. literary work

This section will begin to analyze the different theories seen through the specific objectives proposed for this work. To analyze and compare theories, tables were created, which were explained in the previous chapter corresponding to chapter three, where they were described, designed, and where the purpose and importance of each one was mentioned. The importance of defining these tables in advance is based on the fact that it organizes the information and data collection to be analyzed and compared with greater clarity and organization.

4.2.1 Table 1 Psychological principles and values expressed in *El Arte de*

Amar

<i>Identify the psychological principles and values.</i>		
Principles and Values	Illustrative quote	Student's point of view
Care	Fromm (1959) expressed "Si una mujer nos dijera que ama las flores, y viéramos que se olvida de regarlas, no creeríamos en su amor a las flores. El amor es la preocupación activa por la vida y el crecimiento de lo que amamos" (p. 44).	Love is being careful; people take care of what they love, and this is easily observed. If a person shows no care or protection for something or someone, it is possible that it is not love. Care comes from love.
Responsibility	Fromm (1959) wrote "Acto enteramente voluntario,	When you love someone, you respond to their needs

	<p>constituye mi respuesta a las necesidades, expresadas o no, de otro ser humano” (p. 45).</p>	<p>voluntarily. This means that when you love someone, there is no need to ask them to do something for you, but rather to receive without asking. This can only be achieved through the knowledge that the other person has about their partner. Responsibility within love is a sign of support.</p>
Respect	<p>Fromm (1959) said “capacidad de ver una persona tal cual es, tener conciencia de su individualidad única. Respetar significa preocuparse porque la otra persona crezca y se desarrolle tal como es” (p. 46).</p>	<p>Respect within the context of love means recognizing that people are unique and individual beings. They must also develop and grow, even with our help, but for themselves, not for us. This individual development and growth lead the other person to be authentic, to be themselves. It is this individual authenticity that we love.</p>

Knowledge	Fromm (1959) wrote “Respetar a una persona sin conocerla, no es posible; el cuidado y la responsabilidad serían ciegos si no los guiara el conocimiento” (p. 46).	Knowledge allows us to understand other human beings from a deep and authentic perspective, rather than from appearances or from what we believe them to be. It involves understanding who they really are, recognizing their individuality, and their inner world. Knowing means listening, observing, and understanding empathically, so that when we do something for that person, our action truly responds to their needs. There is no point in acting with good intentions if our actions are not based on what the other person really needs. Acting appropriately is a sign of true knowledge, because it means understanding their thoughts, tastes, concerns, wounds,
-----------	--	---

		and desires. Only then does care cease to be something superficial and become a conscious and meaningful act.
Freedom	Fromm (1959) expressed “el amor maduro unión a condición de preservar la propia integridad, la propia individualidad” (p. 37).	Freedom lies deeply in the act of joining with another person, yet without losing the freedom to be oneself. Love must be shared with each person's individuality, that is, without depending on the other person. When we depend on another person, we do not truly loving who they are, but rather what they provide us; in that case, it is not genuine love, but rather need or possession.

Table 1. Illustrates psychological principles and values expressed in El Arte de

Amar. Source: Researcher's creation

4.2.2 Table 2. Fromm conceptualizes love as a learned skill within a psychological context.

<i>Love as a skill</i>		
Conceptualization of Love	Example	Justification
Discipline	Fromm (1959) wrote “Nunca haré nada bien si no lo hago de una manera disciplinada” (p. 144).	Love requires discipline; love is not just about loving or staying together during the good times. In critical moments for the relationship, you must be able to love in the same way as when the relationship is on good terms. If you “love” only at certain moments in the relationship, especially the good times, love would be like a hobby. We only do a hobby when our mood requires it, but not with discipline. And love is not a passing mood.
Concentration	Fromm (1959) said “La concentración es condición indispensable para el dominio de un arte. Harto bien lo sabe todo aquel que	Concentration is almost impossible to achieve for most people. Culturally, people consume anything with the intention of not

	<p>alguna vez haya intentado aprender un arte” (p. 145).</p>	<p>concentrating. Fromm (1959) said “somos consumidores con la boca siempre abierta, ansiosos y dispuestos a tragarlo todo” (p. 145). Love requires concentration, just as any art requires mastery on our part. We must be able to know what we are doing, and this can only be achieved through real concentration.</p>
<p>Patience</p>	<p>Fromm (1959) mentioned “Si aspiramos a obtener resultados rápidos, nunca aprenderemos un arte” (p. 146).</p>	<p>People who want to achieve results, especially lasting ones with a solid foundation, must be patient. Patience is the foundation upon which goals are built and achieved, for any goal. In modern society, this is difficult for many people to achieve. Love is not impulsive; love is like an activity that unfolds with intention, step by step, not suddenly. It could also be</p>

		compared to the slow but steady growth of a plant.
Concern	Fromm (1959) wrote “Otra condición para aprender cualquier arte es tener una preocupación suprema por el dominio del arte” (p. 146).	The concern for doing things right and for the importance of both ourselves and others is synonymous with love. When we care about ourselves and others, we can reason and act intentionally, logically, and maturely.
Practice	Fromm (1959) stated “Es esencial que la disciplina no se practique como una regla impuesta desde afuera, sino que se convierta en una expresión de la propia voluntad” (p. 148).	Love requires practice, like any art that must be exercised daily, constantly, and consciously. To achieve love, the person themselves is the object of their own learning. That is why those who want to learn to love must practice discipline, concentration, patience, and concern.

Table 2. Illustrate how Fromm conceptualizes love as a skill. Source:

Researcher's creation

4.2.3 Table 3. Fromm's approach to love with other psychological theories and models.

<i>Psychological theories and approaches.</i>		
Fromm's Approach / Theory	Similarities with other approaches	Different Approaches
<p>Love is an art: For Fromm, love must be like an art that requires the same conditions to be authentic love.</p>	<p>The first article that matches ideas similar to Fromm's is DEFINIENDO EL AMOR MÁS ALLÁ DE UNA EMOCIÓN: FUNCIONES Y CARACTERÍSTICAS EN TORNO AL BIENESTAR published in the Iztacala Electronic Journal of Psychology. According to this article, love must be built by making decisions using reason, which leads to conscious and intentional love.</p>	<p>The article Love Addiction, Adult Attachment Patterns and Self-Esteem does not contradict the idea that love is an art, but rather points to love as a psychological phenomenon that can cause negative psychological effects, such as attachment or insecurity.</p>
<p>Love is not an emotion: Because feelings come and go, love is not a passing or spontaneous emotion or feeling. Erich defines it as an</p>	<p>In the same article mentioned above, he specifically emphasizes that love cannot be defined as an emotion. Barragan (2025) explained</p>	<p>Las ideas del amor de R.J. Sternberg: la teoría triangular y la teoría narrativa del amor by Alba Almeida Eleno published by</p>

<p>activity, something that must be actively worked on every day. It is intentional, doing things well and consciously.</p>	<p>that the importance of emotions, affections, and/or motivations is not disregarded; (3) a specific function of love oriented toward well-being is defined; and (4) it is recognized as a dynamic and gradual process. (p. 293). An emotion is something short-term, something brief. Although it does not disregard emotions within the context of love, it does not define it as if it were an emotion either.</p>	<p><i>Univesidad Pontificia de Salamanca coincides in part with the theory that love is a strong emotion that combines intimacy, passion, and commitment. Although commitment is present in Fromm's theory as an element of love, passion and intimacy are not, as they go far beyond the context of genuine love. Almeida (n. d.) pointed out Intimacy, passion, and commitment are the three factors that best define established romantic relationships. (p. 61). As can be seen, the author agrees that the three main elements of love are intimacy, passion, and commitment. However, for Fromm, this would be more about aesthetics and</i></p>
---	--	--

		<i>beauty than psychology and reason.</i>
<p>Love is free and independent:</p> <p>Love must preserve the individuality of each person.</p>	<p>Similarly, in the same article entitled DEFINIENDO EL AMOR MÁS ALLÁ DE UNA EMOCIÓN: FUNCIONES Y CARACTERÍSTICAS EN TORNO AL BIENESTAR. Barragan (2025) pointed out</p> <p>It is stipulated that love is directed toward the well-being of the loved one, thereby excluding behaviors that go against this principle, such as violence, romantic obsession, emotional indifference, or self-centered actions. (p. 294). The overall idea is that true love is linked to people's overall well-being, which means that aggressive or manipulative behavior is not acceptable.</p>	<p>In the work entitled Creencias del amor romántico: grado de acuerdo hacia las mismas y diferencias según género, en estudiantes adolescentes que asisten a la Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente, it was found that several adolescents believe in certain myths about true love, such as that love conquers all. This popular myth could lead people to tolerate dependent behavior.</p>

<p><u>Love as a merchandise:</u></p> <p>In today's world, love is perceived and treated as if it were a product to be bought and sold.</p>	<p>Within the article Love Addiction, Adult Attachment Patterns and Self-Esteem: Testing for Mediation Using Path Analysis is considered love as one of the new addictions today; this behavior can be interpreted as if it is love being a product or substance on which people depend. Gori et al. (2023) pointed out, "Love addiction is one of the 'New Addictions', a heterogeneous set of disorders that shares psychopathological characteristics with substance dependence, characterized by a spasmodic research of the object of dependence without which existence seems meaningless" (introduction). This complements the idea of how love can be labeled as a</p>	<p>No theory found.</p>
--	--	-------------------------

	product to which people can generate an addiction that leads to negative outcomes.	
--	--	--

Table 3. Illustrates psychological principles and values expressed in El Arte de Amar. Source: Researcher's creation

4.3 Themes, Motifs, and Symbols

In this section, the tables are prepared with their respective information on the themes, motifs, and symbols present in the work *El Arte de Amar* by Erich Fromm. The first table, corresponding to section 4.3.1, presents the themes identified in the text. Throughout the book, these themes manifest themselves in a clear and consistent way, as they reflect the central ideas developed by the author. Below are the most relevant themes identified in the work.

4.3.1 Table 4. Themes

<i>Themes</i>		
Theme	Topic Description	How it develops within the work.
Love	Love manifests itself in different ways, and there are several types. Within the present are maternal, fraternal, erotic love, love of self, and love of God. Love is manifested through respect, care, responsibility, and above all, well-being. It implies a bond between	Within the book it develops in several ways, however, Fromm emphasizes five types of love which are brotherly love, maternal love, erotic love, love of self and love of God. Despite mentioning and explaining these five types of love, he emphasizes that love is

	<p>individuals and is deeply linked to psychological conditions that are rarely observed within the context of genuine and authentic love.</p>	<p>manifested in similar ways in the five different types and what sets it apart from others is erotic love for certain characteristics it presents, especially a feature which is the exclusive sexual union with another individual.</p> <p>Fromm repeatedly points out that love is a human ability acquired like any other skill. Love is described as something active and not as something that just happens, this is why the difficult thing is not to find a person to love but to learn to love.</p>
Freedom	<p>Freedom is the ability not to lose individuality. Within love, specifically erotic love, two people become one, despite this the individuality of everyone must be preserved. People must maintain their identity despite having a</p>	<p>The theme of freedom is developed, although on very few occasions, it is done in a very clear way. There are very legible sentences where Fromm (1959) expressed “el amor es hijo de la libertad, nunca de la dominación” (p.</p>

	<p>deep relationship with another person; in fact, it is argued that respect only maintains its essence if freedom is preserved.</p>	<p>46). With phrases like these one understands the meaning that he intends and manages to convey.</p>
<p>Mature love</p>	<p>Mature love is a concept whose definition can be summarized as a type of conscious affection. Mature love involves the four essential elements, which are care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge.</p>	<p>Through the book is the subject on which his chapters are developed, his writing is centered on ideas of mature love. For Fromm, mature love is only achieved when the person has reached emotional maturity, autonomy, and the ability to give or receive. Fromm contrasts that immature love is based on need and dependence, while mature love is characterized by giving and giving, by having the ability to fully love others without changing anything. Fromm (1959) said “El amor inmaduro dice: Te amo porque te necesito. El amor</p>

		<p>maduro dice: te necesito porque te amo.”</p> <p>This sentence summarizes the clear distinction between the two types of love.</p>
Materialism	<p>Materialism involves the material world and makes it part of psychological, mental, or social processes. People prioritize material things, such as money or products, over emotional or social processes in life, such as love. Materialism directly affects these processes. Materialism makes the intangible tangible, creating an imbalance that directly affects and even changes the real meaning of some social processes.</p>	<p>In his writing, Erich Fromm mentions that people are seen as items on store shelves that we can buy simply because they are to our liking. Throughout his writing, Fromm reiterates that if love maintains this concept, it is not love, but merely a passing emotion or taste.</p>

Table 4. Illustrates the themes found in the book. Source: Researcher's creation

4.3.2 Table 5. *Motifs*

The following table corresponds to the section on motifs, which recur throughout the work and contribute to developing the main theme, love.

<i>Motifs</i>		
Motif	Description of the motifs	How it is repeated in the work
Love as a discipline	Love as a discipline refers to the idea that love is a conscious endeavor that is practiced and worked on like any other art form. Discipline is essential to mastering an art and becoming a master in that field, and the same is true of real love. In fact, love is an activity that requires daily actions, skills, and decisions, rather than a passive situation that happens on its own, as is often portrayed in society.	Throughout the different chapters of the book, Fromm not only mentions this idea once, but also reinforces it with constant arguments from different points of view. Throughout his book, Fromm compares love to other arts such as playing an instrument or practicing medicine, explaining that love requires both theory and practice. He mentions that one cannot achieve a goal by studying alone without practicing. Mastering an art requires years of practice and is not something that happens in a short period of time, much

		<p>less something that happens without effort.</p> <p>Furthermore, he repeatedly criticizes the idea that love is a spontaneous emotion, arguing instead that it is a capacity that is developed.</p> <p>He wrote very clearly and explicitly about the four essential qualities involved in love, which are care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge.</p> <p>Finally, in the chapter on the practice of love, he mentions the skills required to learn this art, which consist of discipline, concentration, patience, and dedication.</p>
Love as an act of giving	The reason why love is called an act of giving corresponds to the meaning that in a loved one must give and surrender, and not the opposite, as is commonly believed. In love,	During the course of reading, there is a very special section on the meaning of giving. It includes the idea that giving does not mean losing something; however, in a

	<p>giving is not a symbol of sacrifice or loss; giving means inner wealth that we can surrender and contribute to its growth.</p>	<p>commercial society such as today's, giving without receiving something in return is synonymous with loss. In his discussion of the different types of love (brotherly, maternal, erotic, self-love, and love of God), he explains how each type has its own way of giving. For example, maternal love is characterized by giving care and protection in exchange for nothing, while brotherly love involves offering solidarity and support to other human beings.</p> <p>He argues that for people, giving means giving something up, but giving is actually the opposite; giving is one of the greatest human expressions, as it expresses energy and life.</p>
--	---	--

		<p>Fromm (1959) wrote “quien es capaz de dar de sí es rico. Se siente a sí mismo como alguien que puede entregar a los demás algo de sí” (p. 41).</p> <p>This indicates that giving shows that a person has something inside to offer.</p> <p>Loving is not something passive; loving requires action, and that action involves giving care, responsibility, and respect. It means caring about the other person's growth, responding to their needs, and showing respect for our fellow human beings.</p> <p>When people give of themselves, the love that dwells in their lives is not diminished, as would happen with something material, but rather expanded. Both grow</p>
--	--	--

		<p>emotionally, and a living connection is maintained.</p> <p>Giving in love has absolutely nothing to do with material things; giving in love includes sharing our own life and love with another person or people.</p>
Human separateness	<p>In the book <i>El Arte de Amar</i></p> <p>The conceptual motif of human separateness recurs throughout the book to describe how human beings feel isolated due to their self-awareness. This means that people are conscious of human loneliness and how they try to overcome it as individuals. This motif reinforces the idea that love is the deepest way to create connection and unity between people without losing individuality.</p>	<p>Fromm repeats the idea several times to emphasize the necessity of love in life.</p> <p>At the beginning of the book, he mentions that, unlike animals, humans are conscious of themselves and their individuality. This consciousness causes each person to feel unique and separate from others, which leads to a feeling of loneliness and a search for something to eliminate that loneliness. People use or try to overcome this loneliness through different strategies.</p>

		<p>However, genuine and real love is one of the most appropriate ways to overcome separateness, since love unites people while maintaining their individuality and the authenticity of each being.</p> <p>Fromm (1959) wrote “el amor es la única forma de conocimiento que, en el acto de unión, satisface mi búsqueda” (p. 49).</p> <p>In the different types of love, we see that each type of love seeks to create connection.</p> <p>All these repetitions reinforce the argument that love arises as a response to the feeling of loneliness that humans struggle to eliminate from their lives.</p>
--	--	--

Table 5. Illustrates the motifs found in the book. Source: Researcher’s creation

4.3.3 Table 6. Symbols

The following and final table shows the symbols that appear in the book as part of deep conceptual meanings that are understood through reading, or through their explanation as provided below.

<i>Symbols</i>		
Symbol	Literal meaning	Meaning within the work
Art	Art can be defined and understood as any form of human expression that reflects ideas or emotions. It indicates the creation or elaboration of something.	Within the work, the concept of art refers to the idea that love should be practiced like any traditional and well-known art form that requires mastery of skills and is learned through practice. When the word art is mentioned, it should be understood that the word is not focused on conveying a term of beauty or aesthetics, but rather on understanding art as a discipline and perseverance.
Product	A product is something that is sold in a store or company in exchange, usually for money, or in exchange for something	Within the context of the book, the word takes on the meaning of referring to people as products. When

	<p>else of interest or commercial value.</p>	<p>people are seen as products, love becomes passive and superficial. When love is passive and interpreted as a product, people expect to receive rather than give. Fromm uses the concept of product to refer to and criticize the modern mentality that perceives love and people as products in shop windows or shopping malls.</p>
<p>Milk and honey</p>	<p>The definition of milk refers to a white substance produced by mammals to feed their newborn offspring. Honey is a viscous, thick substance with an extremely sweet taste produced by bees.</p>	<p>When the author uses the phrase milk and honey in one of his arguments, he is not referring to its literal meaning. The author wants to convey a symbol, one that is particularly relevant to maternal love. In fact, this term is explicitly symbolic. When referring to milk, it indicates one of the greatest aspects of love, as it includes</p>

		<p>care and affirmation, according to Fromm.</p> <p>On the other hand, when he refers to honey, it symbolizes the sweetness of life, the love of life itself, and the happiness of being alive.</p> <p>Although he uses the phrase in the context of maternal love, these two concepts result in the meaning that love includes care and the giving of sweetness and happiness.</p>
Apple-bottle-breast	<p>An apple is defined as a fruit, usually red or green in color.</p> <p>A bottle is a container with a cap that is used to store liquids for human consumption or otherwise.</p> <p>By chest, it can refer to the front part of the human body that is attached to the neck, or it can refer to one of the two breasts that are visually</p>	<p>Fromm (1959) expressed “el mundo es un enorme objeto de nuestro apetito, una gran manzana, una gran botella, un enorme pecho” (p. 118).</p> <p>This phrase refers to the fact that, in a certain way, we are all breastfed by the world, thus consuming everything as if it were a product, regardless of whether they</p>

	observed in females, whether human or animal.	are truly material or spiritual objects; they become products for human consumption.
Teams	A team is defined as a group of people who come together to work toward the same goal. Teams can generally be found in sports, or the term can be used to describe a group of people who work together to achieve goals within a company.	When Erich Fromm mentioned the word team in his work, he did so to refer to love and, more specifically, marriage. However, he emphasized that it is one of the most incorrect ways to describe the union of two people for love. For Fromm, as mentioned in the column on literal meaning, a team also means a group of employees who work toward the same goal within a company, and for Fromm, an employee only does their job out of obligation, with courtesy and respect. The same thing happens with marriage if it becomes a team. It would just be two

		<p>people living together with respect and courtesy, which is supposed to work without difficulties, and from then on, they do not know each other and remain strangers for the rest of their lives, just like employees in a company.</p>
<p>Recipes</p>	<p>A recipe is a procedure, usually written, whose purpose is to prepare a meal.</p>	<p>The author uses the word “recipes” to refer to a manual. A manual that people hope to receive with his work, <i>El Arte de Amar</i>, as if they were being taught how to love. This also emphasizes that readers who expect to receive recipes for learning how to love will be very disappointed and mistaken, since the book aims to explain how to achieve genuine love. However, loving is a very personal experience that each person experiences at their own</p>

		pace, just like any discipline they would like to learn.
Open-mouthed consumers	This term is specifically used as a concept by Erich Fromm, although in a literal sense, it can be interpreted as a person who eats a meal with their mouth open.	When Fromm uses this expression, he means that people always feel anxiety, and that anxiety leads them to consume whatever comes their way in life. For example, we consume movies, food, drink, and anything that is supposed to be knowledge. However, consuming anything only reflects a lack of concentration. It reflects that human beings have problems being alone with themselves.
Zombies	A zombie, in simple terms, is a person who has died and come back to life. In that sense, it is a corpse that wanders among humans.	By a zombie, author Erich Fromm refers to people who, despite their bodies being alive, have dead minds. They are zombie-like people who do not think or reason, but simply talk for the sake of

		talking, without any sense or reason.
Concentration	Concentration is the act of remaining attentive to a particular situation. It involves paying attention to a person, task, or job for a certain period of time.	For Erich, concentration is not just about paying attention; for this author, being concentrated means living fully in the present. He emphasizes that people must practice concentration because, in order to love, we need to be concentrated even on ourselves. To love, we must be concentrated and turn that concentration into sensitivity so that we can notice what the other person needs and respond correctly, giving them what they need in an appropriate way. In other words, being focused means being aware of what is happening and acting prudently.

Table 6. Illustrates the symbols found in the book. Source: Researcher's creation

Together, the themes, motifs, and symbols analyzed in this section constitute a fundamental part of the work, as they allow for a deeper understanding of the significant elements present in the work studied. Through this analysis, the most relevant aspects that contribute to the development of the meaning and interpretation of the text were identified and organized. In this way, the tables corresponding to the section on themes, motifs, and symbols were completed, which can be found in the chapter. These tables summarize the information analyzed and provide a clearer and more structured view of the literary elements that enrich the overall understanding of the work.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter presents the conclusions of the research. It presents the findings related to the general objective and the three specific objectives. It also includes recommendations relevant to the study. All of the information presented in this chapter is based on the researcher's approach and on the data previously collected for the development of this thesis.

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusions

The purpose of this conclusion is to demonstrate that the objectives were achieved as outlined at the beginning of this study. To briefly recap, the objective of the research is to analyze love from a psychological perspective, as a conscious practice that can be developed through certain elements, including knowledge, responsibility, respect, and care. Consequently, the objective of this final part of the project is to demonstrate the psychological aspects involved in love as part of a process of reasoned decision-making rather than a spontaneous feeling or emotion.

Furthermore, to achieve this, three specific objectives were established. First, identify the psychological principles and values expressed in *El Arte de Amar*. Second, examine how Fromm conceptualizes love as a learned skill within a psychological context. Third, the researcher compares Fromm's approach to love with other psychological theories and models.

5.2 Conclusions

The following section outlines the conclusion regarding the general objective and presents the conclusions corresponding to each of the three specific objectives outlined in the research. To demonstrate the extent to which these objectives were met and summarize the main findings derived from the analysis conducted.

5.2.1 Conclusion General Objective

- To analyze love as a psychological capacity that can be developed through knowledge, responsibility, respect, and care, based on Erich Fromm's *El Arte de Amar*.

The research showed that the work *El Arte de Amar* can be analyzed from a psychological perspective. Offers an understanding of love as something beyond emotional or instinctive conception. In this sense, the text presents love as an art that, like any other. Love is not innate or something we are born with. Love is acquired and perfected through constant practice, the development of specific skills, and a daily, conscious learning process.

From this perspective, the analysis revealed that love involves the practice of psychological and mental processes, such as attention, discipline, responsibility, and the ability to understand another human being, elements that are also fundamental to the acquisition of other types of art. In this way, the work demonstrates that the practice of love requires skills similar to those employed in artistic fields.

Consequently, the book's psychological approach not only expands our understanding of love as a human phenomenon but also positions it as a practice that demands personal development, reflection, and commitment. These highlight its close relationship with the cognitive and emotional processes proper to human beings.

5.2.2 Conclusion Specific Objective #1.

- To identify psychological principles and values expressed in *El Arte de Amar*.

The purpose of this first objective is to identify and analyze the main psychological foundations and values that are explored throughout the chapters of the book. It also seeks to help readers understand and internalize these elements so that, once identified, they can establish a concept and give meaning to the work.

The research revealed that love, formulated from a psychological perspective, not only involves an emotional experience but is also grounded in the presence and practice of certain principles and values that are essential to its authenticity. In this regard, it was found that

aspects such as respect, responsibility, empathy, commitment, and honesty constitute fundamental pillars that guide the development of healthy emotional relationships.

Likewise, the study suggests that these values do not arise spontaneously but require a conscious process of development and strengthening at the individual level, which involves self-knowledge, emotional maturity, and a willingness for personal growth. Thus, authentic love is configured as a practice that transcends the merely emotional, integrating psychological dimensions that foster the stability and depth of human bonds.

Consequently, it can be concluded that the authenticity of love is closely linked to the application of psychological principles and values.

5.2.3 Conclusion Specific Objective #2.

- To examine how Fromm conceptualizes love as a learned skill within a psychological context.

This specific objective, corresponding to #2, aims to examine the way in which Erich Fromm conceptualizes love as a practice achieved through certain psychological elements. When readers grasp the meaning of Fromm's ideologies, they gain a context that many fail to understand. Understanding this ideology is key to comprehending and reasoning why love means and is much more than just a feeling in people.

To develop this objective, the researcher proceeded to clearly and simply conceptualize the main terms used by Erich Fromm, to facilitate understanding of his approach to love as a skill acquired through learning. This approach allowed for a more accessible interpretation of his ideas, especially considering that his work presents concepts that, in many cases, are not typically addressed in the study of love from an everyday perspective.

Based on the analysis conducted, it became clear that Fromm approaches the learning necessary to achieve authentic love naturally and gradually, explaining that it does not arise spontaneously but requires practice, effort, and personal development. However, the author maintains a distinctive tone throughout his work, as if he were not referring to love in the sense

commonly understood by society. This is because his approach moves away from the traditional idea of love as a simple feeling, presenting it instead as a conscious practice that involves discipline and commitment.

Furthermore, Fromm uses terms, phrases, and passages that are not typically known or used in everyday discourse about love, which can create some initial difficulty in understanding them. However, these elements also allow for a deeper exploration of the topic and offer a more comprehensive and reflective perspective. Consequently, the analysis of these concepts helped the reader develop a broader understanding of love, recognizing it not only as an emotion but as a skill that can be learned, strengthened, and perfected over time.

5.2.4 Conclusion Specific Objective #3.

- To compare Fromm's approach to love with other psychological theories and models.

This study was designed with only three specific objectives, and this represents the last of them. This objective focuses on conducting a comparative analysis so that, once the principles and values involved in love, have been identified as outlined in the first objective, and love has been conceptualized from a perspective that requires the development of psychological elements to achieve genuine love, it becomes possible to compare Erich Fromm's ideas with other theories and ideologies found in various articles and academic sources.

Fromm's approach demonstrated that love transcends transient emotions and superficial feelings, showing that it requires a conscious exercise of skills, values, and principles that enable the building of authentic and meaningful relationships. When comparing this proposal with other theories, it was observed that several of them align with the idea that love is not limited to the emotional realm but also involves psychological processes that guide behavior, decision-making, and commitment in interpersonal relationships. This finding confirms that, within the academic study of love, there is a convergence of ideologies regarding the importance of psychological aspects as the foundation for authentic love.

On the other hand, theories were also found that present divergent or even contradictory positions to Fromm's theory, focusing more on love as a purely sentimental or circumstantial phenomenon, without considering the importance of learning and conscious practice. In this regard, the objective sought not only to identify the commonalities among the different perspectives but also to highlight the differences, critically evaluating which approaches are most coherent from a psychological standpoint.

In conclusion, this latter objective demonstrated that love, when analyzed from Fromm's perspective, can be understood as a complex process that combines reason, consciousness, and decision-making, going beyond simple emotions, and that this vision offers a solid theoretical framework for understanding how human beings can develop authentic, balanced, and lasting emotional relationships. Likewise, the contrast with other theories reinforced the idea that true love is neither spontaneous nor superficial, but rather requires effort, learning, and constant practice, as Fromm proposes.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

From the beginning of this research project, the purpose remained clear and well defined. The question that guided the entire process was the general objective formulated as a question: To what extent can love be understood as a learned psychological capacity, based on knowledge, responsibility, respect, and care, according to Erich Fromm's theory? This question allowed the analysis to be directed toward a deeper understanding of love, moving away from traditional ideas that view it solely as a spontaneous feeling.

In relation to this question, the researcher succeeded in meeting the stated objectives, as it became evident throughout the course of the study through the analysis of *El Arte de Amar* that love can be understood as a capacity that is learned and developed over time. Fromm proposes that loving is not simply feeling, but rather involves an active process that requires effort, discipline, and personal commitment. In this sense, elements such as knowledge of the

other, responsibility toward the beloved, respect for their individuality, and constant care are presented as fundamental pillars for the development of this capacity.

The findings suggest that, from Fromm's perspective, love can indeed be viewed as a psychological skill that is cultivated, rather than something that happens automatically. This conclusion is significant because it challenges common beliefs that tend to idealize love as something that simply happens without the need for learning or awareness.

Furthermore, both the research question and the work analyzed contribute to understanding the act of loving as an action that involves responsibility and awareness. In other words, loving involves not only emotions but also decisions and attitudes that must be developed intentionally. For this reason, *El Arte de Amar* should not be viewed solely as a theoretical work but also as a tool for reflection that invites us to question popular ideas about love and to rethink the way people understand and practice their relationships.

In conclusion, this study allowed us to recognize that love, far from being a purely emotional phenomenon, can be understood as a complex capacity that requires learning, practice, and commitment, which represents a more critical and conscious perspective on this concept.

5.4 Recommendations

For a university student, writing a thesis might seem simple; however, the process of actually writing it can become complicated. Therefore, to produce a work of this analytical and academic level, it is necessary to follow certain recommendations to facilitate the process. To avoid certain problems, the following tips can be followed.

To begin, it is essential to have a thorough understanding of the selected work. This implies having read the work at least twice in its entirety, so that its details, themes, and even possible interpretations can be fully grasped. Multiple readings allow for the identification of relevant elements and details that could serve as the basis for developing a research project.

Likewise, this detailed knowledge makes it easier to recognize the extent to which the work lends itself to academic analysis, allowing for a more precise definition of the work's focus. By better understanding the work, the student can formulate clearer and more relevant research questions, as well as establish achievable objectives. Consequently, the research process becomes more organized and coherent, since it stems from a deep understanding of the study material.

Having considered the above, it is necessary to proceed to draft clear and well-defined objectives that will guide the research process. These objectives should precisely express what the work aims to achieve, ensuring they are coherent and relevant to the selected topic and the analysis of the work.

Furthermore, the student needs to have a genuine conviction regarding these objectives, as this directly influences their motivation and commitment throughout the project. When there is clarity and certainty about what one seeks to achieve, it generates greater interest and curiosity to delve deeper into the topic. This encourages the exploration of diverse sources of information and a more detailed analysis of the content.

In this way, having well-defined objectives not only allows for maintaining a clear direction throughout the research but also encourages the student to investigate more broadly and critically within the field of study, thus enriching the quality of the final work.

Secondly, it is not only important to have a thorough understanding of the book on which the literary analysis will be based, but also to research its author. This involves investigating their personal life, ideologies, historical and cultural context, as well as any other works they may have written. Knowledge of these details allows for a better understanding of the author's intentions and the potential meanings of the work.

Likewise, analyzing other works by the same author can help identify themes they write about, writing styles, and ideologies that enrich the interpretation of the text under investigation.

In this way, the student is not limited solely to the content of the book but rather broadens their perspective and establishes deeper and more well-founded connections.

Therefore, having information about the author contributes to supporting the ideas developed in the research with greater accuracy and certainty. This strengthens the argumentation and lends greater solidity to the analysis, since it is based not only on personal interpretation but also on broader knowledge.

Thirdly, once the research objectives have been established, it is essential to use them as a guide throughout the entire process. These should serve as a guide or outline to maintain coherence and focus throughout the work, avoiding unnecessary deviations from the intended research topic.

Constantly adhering to the established objectives throughout the process ensures that each part of the research has a clear purpose and is related to the initial premise. This guarantees that the information gathered, the analysis performed, and the conclusions reached align with the objectives.

Furthermore, maintaining this coherence results in a more organized, understandable, and structurally sound work. Staying within the established context not only facilitates the research process but also contributes to a clearer, more precise, and relevant final result.

Another important recommendation is to review and read similar works to gain insight into the structure, tone, and approach to academic research. Analyzing these types of documents allows students to become familiar with the organization of a thesis, as well as the appropriate use of formal language and the presentation of arguments.

References

Almeida, A. (2013). *Las ideas del amor de R.J. Sternberg: la teoría triangular y la teoría narrativa del amor*. Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 46, 57–86.

<https://doi.org/10.36576/summa.31322>

Barragán, A. (2025). *Definiendo el amor más allá de una emoción: funciones y características en torno al bienestar*. *Revista Electrónica de Psicología Iztacala*, 28(1).

<https://revistas.unam.mx/index.php/rep/rep/article/view/91208>

Castro, M. F. (2022, agosto). *Creencias del amor romántico: grado de acuerdo hacia las mismas y diferencias según género, en estudiantes adolescentes que asisten a la Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente* [Tesis de licenciatura, Universidad de Costa Rica].

Repositorio Institucional UCR. <https://repositorio.sibdi.ucr.ac.cr/items/be2e4ae2-303c-4263-96bb-e52c6c49faf5>

Copson, A. (2015). What is humanism? In A. Copson & A. Grayling (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of Humanism* (pp. 1–63). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118793305.ch1>

Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2025, October 13). *World War II*. Britannica.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/World-War-II>

Fernández Castro, M. (2022). *Creencias del amor romántico: grado de acuerdo hacia las mismas y diferencias según género, en estudiantes adolescentes que asisten a la Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente* [Tesis de licenciatura, Universidad de Costa Rica].

Repositorio Institucional UCR. <https://repositorio.sibdi.ucr.ac.cr/items/be2e4ae2-303c-4263-96bb-e52c6c49faf5>

Fromm, E. (1959). *El Arte de Amar*. PAIDÓS.

Gaber, M. (2021). *Commodification of the human condition in Dennis Kelly's Love and Money (2006)*. *Egyptian Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 13(1), 157–180.
<https://doi.org/10.21608/ejels.2024.413604>

Gori, A., Russo, S., & Topino, E. (2023). *Love addiction, adult attachment patterns and self-esteem: Testing for mediation using path analysis*. *Journal of Personalized Medicine*, 13(2), Article 247. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jpm13020247>

Habsy, B. A. (2020). *Eclectic hermeneutic method: A philosophical study*. *JOMSIGN: Journal of Multicultural Studies in Guidance and Counseling*, 4(2), 189–205.
<https://doi.org/10.17509/jomsign.v4i2.28766>

Katyayani, K. (2024). *Influence of attachment styles on intimacy and love styles*. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(2), 1212–1227. <https://doi.org/10.25215/1202.107>

Kellner, D. (n.d.). *Erich Fromm, Judaism, and the Frankfurt School*. Retrieved October 15, 2025, from <https://www.pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/Illumina%20Folder/kell24.htm>

McMeekin, N., Wu, O., Germen, E., & Briggs, A. (2020). *How methodological frameworks are being developed: Evidence from a scoping review*. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 20, 173. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-020-01061-4>

Pedraza, S. (2025). *The Cold War and its consequences: Introduction to the Cold War special issue of Social Science History*. *Social Science History*, 1–4.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2025.10111>

Pieters, R. G. M., & van Raaij, W. F. (1988). *Functions and management of affect: Applications to economic behavior*. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 9(2), 251–281.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870\(88\)90016-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870(88)90016-6)

Piras, E. M., & Miele, F. (2019). *On digital intimacy: Redefining provider–patient relationships in remote monitoring*. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 41(S1), 116–131.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.12947>

Taherdoost, H. (2022). *What are different research approaches? Comprehensive review of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method research, their applications, types, and limitations.* *Journal of Management Science & Engineering Research*, 5(1), 16–29.

<https://doi.org/10.30564/jmser.v5i1.4538>

Vocabulary.com. (n.d.). *Superficiality*. Vocabulary.com.

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/superficiality>