



## The Special style in Ernest Hemingway's Narratives

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### ABSCTRACT

This article argues that the notion of 'death' overwhelms most of Hemingway's works. 'Death', as being conceived by Ernest Hemingway in his works is widely driven from the various cultures he has been exposed to as a journalist, a writer and a soldier during the World War One. This article is motivated, by one unique question:

Are there any stylistic elements bearing the concept of death  
To examine this question, the study reveals that Hemingway uses wind, cold, dark, night, rain and black as symbols to show his angst to 'death'. Hemingway's own experience is mirrored in many of his works; A Farwell to Arms is studied because it is the most striking example. The novel is analyzed to depict the inserted stylistic elements referring to 'death'. For Whom the Bell Tolls bears various types of repetition used to hammer the notion of death. The aforementioned novel is subjected to the study because it best reflects the analysis since it is a novels of war.

**Key words:** Epistrophe, Repetition, Reiteration.

### الملخص:

يظهر هذا المقال أن فكرة الموت تغمر معظم أعمال همنغواي  
فكرة الموت كما تم تصميمها من قبل إرنست همنغواي في أعماله، هي نابعة من  
احتكاكه بالثقافات المختلفة التي حاكها كصحفي وككاتب وكجندي  
علي مدى الحرب العالمية الأولى.  
فالمقال يحتوي علي سؤال بحثي يتمثل في : هل هناك عناصر لغوية استعملها  
الكاتب تدل على مفهوم الموت؟

عند دراسة هذا السؤال، تكشف الدراسة أن همنغواي استخدم الأسماء مثل المطر والرياح والبرد، الليل، الظلام، والصفات كالأسود ومظلم كرموز لإظهار الشجن اتجاه الموت

و للإجابة على السؤال، تم تحليل رواية وداعا للأسلحة لتوضيح العناصر الأسلوبية التي تم إدراجها من طرف الكاتب

إشارة إلى "الموت". لمن تقرر الاجراس وهي موضع الدراسة الأسلوبية التي تحوي على أنواع مختلفة من التكرار استنجد بها الكاتب لإبراز فكرة الموت. تعرض الرواية للدراسة، لأنها تناسب التحليل ولأنها رواية حرب. كما يلاحظ أن الصراع مع الموت في أعمال همنغواي يقترب زمنيا وبالتالي. كان الانتحار عدا تنازليا لهمنغواي الذي لا يعود حسب اعتقادي فقط إلى تدهور حالته الصحية. بل هو أيضا لأنه كان قد ورث جينات "انتحارية".

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الموت الحرب الأسلوب التكرار الرمزية

## Introduction

Ernest Hemingway contributed to the shape of the American identity and their national consciousness. However, he cannot – alone- represent the typical American writers' view. As much as I go along with in this article, will allow me to give, another concept of death, a wider concept, I guess, to be added to other concepts stated by other researchers on Hemingway's works.

From his very beginning of his writing career, Hemingway's style was a target of much criticism and of a great deal of comment and controversy. And considerable interest has developed in the literary sources of his work. With a simple, direct, and unornamented style, probably inherited from his early career as a journalist, his new challenging technique has put him on a pedestal beside other great writers. Critics noticed that Hemingway avoids the adjective whenever possible, but with his incontestable skill the effect of his writing has always been great.

Hemingway in *In Our Time* said of his writing that in most of his work, he never writes until the ideas are in order and he never sets down a sentence on paper until he has it so expressed that it will be clear to anyone. He said that he sometimes thinks that his style is suggestive rather than direct. The reader must often use his imagination or lose the most subtle part of his thoughts. He also said that he took great pains with his work, pruning

and revising with a tireless hand. And that he had the welfare of his creations very much at heart. He cuts them with infinite care, and burnishes them until they become brilliants. What many another writer would be content to leave in massive proportions, he polishes into a tiny gem. A writer's style should be direct and personal, his imagery rich and earthy, and his words simple and vigorous. The greatest writers have the gift of brilliant brevity, are hard workers, diligent scholars and competent stylists.

Perhaps his parents' rejection to the first copies of his book *In Our Time* (1924) made him stick to that type of style when we know how obstinate Hemingway has always been. Sharply criticized by his parents, especially by his father and indeed; a crude, vulgar and an unsentimental style, Hemingway seems adopting this particular style and forever. What his family and critics did not know was that that type of fiction in particular was used as a therapy for his psychological adjustment. And it is, perhaps, this style was precisely the reason why a great many other people liked his work. When writing, Hemingway finds real emotions and conveys these emotions to the reader which they are transformed later into excitement. Hemingway makes his reader share the same feeling with him and with his characters as well.

The concept of death overwhelms the most of Hemingway's works. It is his main concern. Death as an obsession in Hemingway's life, particularly in short stories and novels focusing on his dramatic characters which were an expression of his inner strength.. Hemingway's intention for suicide through his works stated chronologically as a countdown to his last days.

Countless articles concerning the theme of death have been produced and many of Hemingway's works have been studied. More than half a century after Hemingway's death, he is seen as a master writer. When alive, Hemingway was compared to the most prominent writers, and other worthies, and his status as a literary giant was rarely questioned.

Most critics acknowledge that Hemingway never lost sight of death in his novels and that passing time presents thought of death and unsettling realization and as a reason for hopelessness. Hemingway never forgot the fact that time moves human being toward death for Hemingway, life characterized by countless variety and movements. Its squeamish, beauty is boosted that by knowing that we humans live short lives and lose everything when we die. We live our life at its utmost, postponing our acknowledgement of death. The modern spectatorial relationship to death was frequently voiced as a problem in the literature written around the period of the First World War. However, as a modernist writer, Ernest Hemingway concern of the concept of death and mourning is different from his contemporaries.

What can be noticed is that from the very beginning of Ernest Hemingway's novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, death is a frequent and familiar theme in Ernest Hemingway's own family. Thus, it is obvious that death affected both Ernest Hemingway's own psychology and his fiction. Another observation is that the aforementioned novel is the work where Ernest Hemingway's allusions to death is more obviously seen. The recurring psychic states dwelt in every person but only the spontaneous individual creativity make it emerge to the surface and that is exactly what make the difference

This article argues that the notion of 'death' overwhelms most of Hemingway's works. 'Death', as being conceived by Ernest Hemingway in his works is widely driven from the various cultures he has been exposed to as a journalist, a writer and a soldier during the World War One and the Spanish Civil War. This article is displayed to answer to the following question: Are there any stylistic elements bearing the concept of death?

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### **The special style in Hemingway's narratives.**

Indeed Ernest Hemingway uses stylistic devices as obsessive reoccurrence and as an answer to meta-physical angst. Hemingway unconsciously plans for suicide because he was haunted by death and mostly he is pushed by internal genes inheriting from his father.

When reading. The novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, from the very beginning it is noticed that they are the works where Ernest Hemingway reveals his angst to death Ernest Hemingway managed to represent a different representation of death not only from the traditional thematic technique but also through some stylistic devices he used to hammer the idea of 'death' all along his aforementioned novels. The novels are a nothing but his own experience. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, it is his autobiographical story depicting his own life where he participated in the Spanish Civil War as a journalist and as a soldier and a lover.

Concrete examples will be analyzed in depth and quotations from the novel will be used to strengthen the illustrations. No rigorous argument

are claimed to be constructed but mere considerations of logic and of psychology will enter into the development of this paper. Repetitions will not be defined in ranges of theories but only circumscribed in the course of the given argument

In his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway, through his character, Robert Jordan prefers to be a dead lion than a alive dog. He waits for no reward. He knows that game is lost. Nevertheless, he delivers the attack on the enemy for the honor's sake, for the man's honor. *I wish they would come now, he said. "I wish they would come right now because the leg is starting to hurt now. It must be swelling."* (FWBT p.442)

"He works like hell and through it ", she observed .He rewrote the ending of *A Farewell to Arms* seventy times, and cites as evidence, and in fact more than thirty variant endings have been unearthed among his working drafts."( Donalson p.7)

The aim of this article is to investigate the concept of death in Ernest Hemingway's works. It is a stylistic analytical study which tries to find out essential stylistic features the writer applied on the literary filed and to explain why the below stated with the essential messages on the concept of death, portrayed in Hemingway's novels. It is notices that there are some repetitions in the novel.

What are the types of repetition Hemingway uses in his writing style in the novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to accentuate the concept of death? Is the choice of the stylistic devices randomly done?

From the stylistic study and analyses of his works the article concludes that Hemingway is a distinguishing writer whose narrative structure, character representation and writing style are uniquely bound by the concept of death.

And the article recommends that, because of his distinctive writing style and simplicity, his works especially *For Whom the Bell Tolls* should be used as illustrations to teach stylistics for specialized students.

The model of analysis to be used in this article is not a checklist which enables us to collect data on a fairly systematic basis, but the model used is a selective abstracts to illustrate the stylistic device 'repetition' and all its kinds, used to hammer the concept of "death"

## **The Analysis**

The analysis of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* introduces us to the protagonist, Robert Jordan, an American who joins the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War as a demolition expert. We first see him climbing a treacherous mountain path with his elderly, but incredibly strong, guide

Anselmo. Robert Jordan emphasized that in war, there exist only those who can and cannot be trusted; he trusts everything about Anselmo except his judgment, which has not yet been tested and which Jordan reasons is "his own responsibility." Anselmo is a good guide and the job to which he leads him, to blow out a bridge, is like many others Jordan has performed, but for an undefined reason he is worried about "other things."

When we read *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, we could easily notice some stylistic features overwhelming the novel. Here are some of them:

### **DIACOPE<sup>1</sup>**

"After the attack starts. As soon as the attack has started and not before. So that no reinforcements will come up over that road." He pointed with his pencil. "I must know that nothing will come up over that road." "And when is the attack?" "I will tell you. But you are to use the date and hour only as an indication of a probability. You must be ready for that time. You will blow the bridge after the attack has started. You see?" he indicated with the pencil. "That is the only road on which they can bring up reinforcements. That is the only road on which they can get up tanks, or artillery, or even move a truck toward the pass which I attack. I must know that bridge is gone. Not before, so it can be repaired if the attack is postponed. No. It must go when the attack starts and I must know it is gone".

-----1Diacope is a rhetorical term meaning repetition of a word or phrase with one or two intervening words. It derives from a Greek word meaning "cut in two"

One can notice at the beginning of the paragraph a repetition of the attack starts and the attack has started, they are placed before and after as soon as to make a diacope<sup>1</sup>; to emphasize on the notion of 'death' that when the attack starts or has started, both 'death' is there. Robert Jordan must blow the bridge which is something very risky.

"You must be ready for that time. You will blow the bridge after the attack has started. You see?" the Comrade General orders.

General, another time, hammers 'the attack has started' implicitly warning his soldier to take care; 'death' is there. "Robert Jordan could walk well enough himself and he knew from following him since before daylight that the old man could walk him to death (p.4)

The attack was postponed but Golz, the General still giving instructions:

"I do not like to ask people to do such things and in such a way," Golz went on. "I could not order you to do it. I understand what you may be forced to do through my putting such conditions. I explain very carefully so that you understand and that you understand all of the possible difficulties and the importance."(p.5)

A repetition (diacope) to make the soldiers understand the difficulties of the mission 'death' - is there, it is important for them to understand that.

## EPISTROPHE<sup>1</sup>

"It was the Russian term for guerilla work behind the lines. "Very much," Robert Jordan said. He grinned. "It is very healthy in the open air." "I like it very much when I was your age, too," Golz said. "They tell me you blow bridges very well.

1 Epistrophe: Figure of repetition that occurs when the last word or set of words in one sentence, clause, or phrase is repeated one or more times at the end of successive sentences, clauses, or phrases. Example "...and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Very scientific. It is only hearsay. I have never seen you do anything myself. Maybe nothing ever happens really. You really blow them?" he was teasing now. "Drink this," he handed the glass of Spanish brandy to Robert Jordan. "You really blow them?" "Sometimes" "You better not have any sometimes on this bridge. No, let us not talk any more about this bridge. You understand enough now about that bridge "(p.5)

Robert Jordan wants to forget about blowing the bridge, just for a while, and ceases the opportunity, when Golz, the General, gets out of the subject of blowing the bridge – "was the Russian term for guerilla work behind the lines. "Very much," -Robert ceases the opportunity and grinned: "It is very healthy in the open air." and he could carry his General away from the subject, Goltz answered:

"I like it very much when I was your age, too,"

Nevertheless, Golz could not forget the bridge too long and said:

You really blow them?" "Sometimes" "You better not have any sometimes on this bridge. No, let us not talk any more about this bridge. You understand enough now about that bridge "

No time for grinning or discussion, time for blowing the bridge. Time for killing or being killed. The concept of "death" is omnipresent and it is recalled when the soldiers tend to forget it just for a while. Hemingway uses a repetition of the kind of epistrophe.

"Tomorrow night they would be outside the Escorial in the dark along the road; the long lines of trucks loading the infantry in the darkness; the men, heavy loaded, climbing up into the trucks; the machine-gun sections lifting their guns into the trucks; the tanks being run up on the skids onto the long-bodied tank trucks; pulling the Division out to move them in the night for the attack on the pass. He would not think about that. That was not his business. That was Golz's business. He had only one thing to do and that was what he should think about and he must think it out clearly and take

everything as it came along, and not worry. To worry was as bad as to be afraid. It simply made things more difficult.”(p.7)

Hemingway starts the narration by ‘tomorrow’ followed by ‘night’ which means the fear of ‘death’ and ‘night’ the near-synonym of ‘death’. Hemingway could have used The next night instead of tomorrow night. Hemingway wants to show the anxiety towards ‘death’. It starts early in the morning and continues until the night arrives. One should analyze each word apart because; it seems to me that Hemingway does not put words randomly.

Then on the same line, ‘dark’ another near-synonym of ‘death’, it is a reiteration of the notion of ‘death’. When Hemingway writes “Tomorrow night they would be outside the Escorial”, what is the need to say “in the dark”? Is there any night without ‘dark’? One should understand that it is not a spicing up description but done one purpose to emphasize on the notion of ‘death’.

The sentence bears sixty-three words with a non-compete-stop, but by using semi-colons<sup>1</sup>. Hemingway wants to make his readers breathe as much as the soldiers when climbing the mountains up; he allows them (his readers) to have a bit of rest. If he uses full stops, the readers will have a complete rest and don’t feel what the soldiers feel and if he uses commas, the rest given will not be sufficient enough to continue their climbing for soldiers and reading for readers.

<sup>1</sup>The semicolon (;) is a punctuation mark in English separating elements but used much less than the comma. It is more often used in more advanced extended sentences and adds a formal tone. Its name implies that it indicates a separation that is neither full (as indicated by the period), nor minute (as indicated by a comma). The semicolon denotes a half-way separation between elements close in meaning. Skilled writers know that they should not overuse the semicolon for mere "spicing up «but for a specific stylistic reason.

## NEAR-SYNONYM

“I wonder if he has a pair of boots or if he rides in those alpargatas, he thought. He must have quite an outfit. But I don’t like that sadness, he thought. That sadness is bad. That’s the sadness they get before they quit or before they betray. That is the sadness that comes before the sell-out.”

Robert is not at ease when he has the discussion with Pablo and thinks he is the cause of any “death”, that is why he uses a reiteration of a near-synonym of the notion of ‘death’ which is ‘sadness’ and the use of ‘betray’ which means treason and ‘death’ at the end.

“In Spain there are many mountains. There are the Sierra de Gredos if one leaves here.” “Not for me,” Pablo said. “I am tired of being hunted.



Here we are all right. Now if you blow a bridge here, we will be hunted. If they know we are here and hunt for us with planes, they will find us. If they send Moors to hunt us out, they will find us and we must go. I am tired of all this. You hear?" He turned to Robert Jordan. "What right have you, a foreigner, to come to me and tell me what I must do?"

Pablo wants to dissuade Robert not to blow the bridge lest they are caught and killed, and to dissuade him he uses the verb "hunt" many times to make it hammer his mind so that he puts pressure on him and make him change his mind. Hemingway uses a repetition of the type of reiteration.

## Conclusion

I confess that the pleasure of my first readings to some of Hemingway's works, especially those about war, can never come back again because the first readings were for pleasure as such; I read, I enjoyed and I appreciated. But as soon as I started reading with a scrutinized eye of a researcher, this has restricted the pleasure I used to receive from literature. I used to read with pleasure works that express values even though that I do not necessarily share. That all has gone for the sake of research. I, for one, who choose, restrict my reading may be doing so because I want to bring to my reading some conceptions about theme. Candidly I feel more deprived of the pleasure of some of Hemingway's works. However, those who do not deal with research do not pay attention to how the carpet has been woven but the finished look of it that makes sense.

Being aware of the use of stylistic elements used by the writer, has added a great deal to my non-pleasure. Since I, when reading, I expect the bad situations the hero is going to meet, in some of his novels without any surprise. I am warned beforehand. Because for those who experienced Hemingway's techniques, know quite well that Hemingway puts "ill omens" to the reader, every now and then to get them prepared to the coming situation, especially with novels of war. The expressions of feelings towards Death vary from an author to another; everyone juxtaposes his belief, his upbringing, his own experience yet the stories always end up in death. It seems to be that American literature is the reflection of America itself since it has undergone many wars and conflicts and the American, if he wants to live he should accept the risk of death. For Hemingway, to have a real meaning of life, the experience of death must be repeated again and again. This belief may be resulting from Hemingway's paranoia.

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