“Can’t You Hear He Speaks Spanish?”
The Theme of Language in Ernest Hemingway’s
For Whom the Bell Tolls

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27,344 words
1 Introduction

As Michael Bell affirms in his article “Metaphysics of Modernism:” the medium employed to create art becomes the focal point in the modernist period. Language therefore occupies the center of attention in modernist literature. Ernest Hemingway, who belonged to the “Lost Generation,” was exposed to and inspired by these modernist linguistic experiments. As an American expatriate, he took pride in his knowledge of foreign languages, which set him apart from mere visitors and resulted in his self-attributed status of “resident” instead of “tourist.” He had entertained a fascination with Spain and its people from his first arrival in the country in 1922, but it was the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 that led him to write *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. The novel is a linguistic experiment that combines the English and Spanish language in a particular way. The theme of language indeed is crucial in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, since it serves to characterize the Spanish people and culture, which was Hemingway’s main goal besides informing the public about the Spanish Civil War.

Although much has been written about other modernist expatriates’ linguistic experiments such as Gertrude Stein’s writings, Hemingway merely figures in these debates. A good example of this is Joshua Miller’s study on modernist multilingualism in America that investigates writings by Gertrude Stein and John Dos Passos, while only briefly mentioning Hemingway whose “reduced idiom […] proved far less challenging” (139) than the linguistic experiments of other modernist authors. Recent studies on Hemingway’s writing tend to focus on aspects other than the representation of language such as gender roles. Some scholars have tackled his approach to language in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* at the time of its publication; yet, they do not pay as much attention to the impact of these methods to represent language as to other features of the novel. Modernist studies on processes of transnationalism, globalization and multilingualism such as Matthew Hart and Jahan Ramazani’s have attracted a lot of attention. Accordingly, this study examines to what extent Hemingway’s approach to language, and especially his use of multiple languages, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* has an effect on characterization, on the perception of national identity and on the supposed linguistic capabilities of the reader as well as his or her reaction to the multilingual representation.

In this dissertation, I consider Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* a modernist work that showcases the period’s experimental attitude concerning the approach to language. Hemingway’s method aims to represent a Spanish-speaking environment through the English
language, while also incorporating Spanish directly into the writing. I examine (1) what techniques Hemingway uses to represent a diverse linguistic environment and (2) how these techniques have an effect on our interpretation of the text, both on the level of the story and on the level of its sociopolitical implications.

This dissertation first relates the linguistic project of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to a theoretical framework that discusses theories of multilingualism in literature and the representation of multilingualism through translation techniques. I explain the theoretical concepts of multilingualism, monolingualism and translational mimesis and link them to the novel. The modernist features that prevail in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* will be clarified at this point in the paper as well, because they are intimately connected to Hemingway’s use of language and experience as an expatriate writer.

Hemingway’s relation to Spain and the socio-historical context of the Spanish Civil War are indispensable to the understanding of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and its linguistic situation. Both are discussed in the second part of this dissertation. I start off with the author’s biographical information concerning his work and life as an expatriate, in particular in Spain. I inform the reader on the Spanish Civil War and the literature associated with it in order to explore Hemingway’s connection to this historical event as he worked as a journalist reporting on the civil war.

Finally, I analyze how Hemingway approaches the theme of language in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. I take into account the ways in which the Spanish language is evoked by incorporating Spanish words into the writing as well as by simulating Spanish through an English medium. Hemingway’s techniques of representing Spanish in a mostly Anglophone novel will be linked to issues such as characterization, national identity, genre and storyline: How does this approach of the theme of language contribute to the characterization of the Spanish people? How does it relate to the national identity of the Spaniards and of the English-speaking, American protagonist? How does the language in the novel help determine to what genre it belongs? How does the representation of the multilingual context add meaning to the storyline or the novel’s content?

The title of this dissertation includes a phrase from Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*: “Can’t you hear he speaks Spanish?” This sentence demonstrates the importance of language in Hemingway’s novel (Hemingway 218). Although the novel is mostly written in English, the spoken language that is represented is Spanish. The quote refers to the fact that even when the American protagonist Robert Jordan’s speech is transferred to English, the character is speaking Spanish. At the same time, the question seems to indicate some form of
doubt as to what language is spoken. Jordan’s Spanish, indeed, is far from perfect even if the Spanish guerilla fighters seem to understand him. The quote hints at the fact that spoken Spanish (“Can’t you hear”) is transferred to the written medium of English, and what problems this may create. The quote thus indicates the complexity of language in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. 
2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Multilingualism

2.1.1 Monolinguvalism as Multilingualism’s Antonym

Monolinguvalism implies that people can only “possess one ‘true’ language;” that is, their “mother tongue,” which connects them to a specific “ethnicity, culture, and nation” (Yildiz 2). As a result, the first language is favored above others and often receives the status of an official language, which does not necessarily mean that it is the only language spoken in a certain environment (Taylor-Batty 7-8). In Europe, monolingualism was introduced as a substitute for the coexistence of various languages, because of changes in politics, philosophy and culture (Yildiz 6). The emergence of this “monolingual paradigm” in the eighteenth century hid multilingual presences from view without doing away with them completely (Yildiz 2-3). Consequently, the introduction of this model altered multilingual habits (4). Some countries in which various languages coexist prefer monolingualism to bi- or multilingualism, because it creates a sense of security and unity (Miller 6).

Multilingualism suggests the presence of multiple languages in a certain environment or community. As John Edwards points out, being bilingual or even multilingual is a necessary quality for most people nowadays (Edwards qtd. in Taylor-Batty 7). Although multilingualism seems to be a phenomenon caused by globalization, it has existed for a long time and is more widespread than linguists thought it to be (Yildiz 2). Multilingualism simply has become more noticeable because the monolingual model is less fixed as a consequence of “globalization” as well as the reevaluation of the position of nation-states (3). Despite monolingualism’s diminishing influence, no real multilingual model has emerged to replace it, although some scholars such as propose that this process has already started (Yildiz 5). Therefore, Yasmine Yildiz proposes the use of the term “postmonolingual,” which confirms the existence a monolingual model while at the same time indicating the attempt to move away from that paradigm (5). The introduction of the notion of multilingualism is necessary when taking into account its importance in the twentieth century “for modernism on the one hand and for postcolonial and transnational writing on the other” (Yildiz 15). Although most uses of the theme of language in these artistic movements center on “language’ in the
singular,” they are also indispensable when attempting to move away from the monolingual model toward the acceptance of multilingualism (Yildiz 26).

2.1.2 Monolingualism and Multilingualism in Connection with Nationalism

Monolingualism reinforces the speaker’s connection to a specific “ethnicity, culture, and nation” (Yildiz 2). The increasing value of the nation and national identity strengthened the idea of one language’s predominance (3). Monolingualism stresses the importance of the “mother tongue;” the term itself reinforces the notion “that having one language [is] the natural norm,” while confirming that multilingualism is detrimental to a sense of unity in people and communities (Yildiz 6). Only the mother tongue enables a person to “properly think, feel, and express oneself” and is therefore indispensable in achieving a harmonious nation (Yildiz 7). This idea of language and nation going hand in hand was prompted by the philosophic notion that a language is a specific unit that is connected to its speakers in such a way that it contributes to their identity and characteristic features (7). This conception reinforces the difference between a monolingual and multilingual situation.

Johann Gottfried Herder, a late eighteenth-century German thinker, believes that every language is unique as it is the particular production of a certain people (Yildiz 7). As a result, language becomes inherent to a speaker’s national identity and shapes his or her sense of belonging to a society or a nation (8-9). However, this causes an author’s potential creativity to be restricted to works in his or her primary language. An author is therefore unable to create valuable works in other or “multiple languages at the same time” (9). While monolingualism was the dominant idea in the eighteenth century, the idea changed in the twentieth century. While some national ideals still prevailed, a tendency that stressed linguistic variety and cross-influences emerged, as demonstrated by literary works like Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Still, the association of the mother tongue with “origin, and identity” continues to be prominent nowadays even if the words “first language” are used to denominate the concept (Yildiz 13).

Language enables people to reflect on issues of “individual and collective” identity (Kellman viii). Accordingly, multilingualism can be seen as an amplifying element of this identity. Because language in itself is limited by “its repertoire of sounds and structures,” the speaker’s possibilities of expression are limited as well (viii). Consequently, monolingualism has a restricting quality, whereas multilingualism provides a more exhaustive version of
reality as the restrictions related to one language can be compensated by using another. This enables the speaker to establish not only a more complete personal identity, but also a broader understanding of his or her society and the world (viii).

2.1.3 Opposition to Monolingualism and Multilingualism

2.1.3.1 Monolingualism as a Problematic Concept

Juliette Taylor-Batty believes the notion of monolingualism suggests that only one language can exist in a certain environment as opposed to Yildiz’s belief that the concept entails a preference for the mother tongue. Nevertheless, Taylor-Batty’s interpretation is controversial because it denies the presence of other languages besides the first language in a society. In addition, Mikhail Bakhtin believes that monolingualism is a problematic concept in itself, since there is an “inherent diversity within any language” (Taylor-Batty 8). Every individual language is characterized by inconsistencies and influenced by other languages. Therefore, each language is subject to the same issues as languages in a multilingual context. According to Taylor-Batty, “we are all ‘multilingual’ anyway, even if we think we speak only one language” (8). As a result, no language exists independently from others, since they continuously influence one another. Moreover, every language contains other languages, which makes speaking one language impossible. Multilingualism is therefore the rule in every speaker even when they think they are monolingual.

With his statement “we never speak only one language,” Jacques Derrida also disproves “the nationalist myth of monolingualism” (Derrida qtd. in Miller 26). He writes from a colonial perspective in which the monolingual paradigm of the other – that is, the colonial ruler – is imposed on a certain group. He notes that “‘[h]aving’ a language, even if it is one’s only language” does not justify a people’s right on possessing it (Derrida qtd. in Yildiz 41). Possessing a language is not possible in a natural way, but can be achieved through illusionary, political ideas that allow an unnatural ownership of language (Derrida 23). For Derrida, “[a]nyone should be able to declare under oath: I have only one language and it is not mine; my ‘own’ language is, for me a language that cannot be assimilated” (25). This means that although a person speaks a language, this does not mean that he or she can completely understand it.
Steven Kellman believes that it is true that although English, like any other language, provides the speaker with the possibility to express feelings and ideas, it is limited by “its repertoire of sounds and structures” to express these “thoughts and emotions” (viii). Consequently, monolingualism has a restricting quality, whereas multilingualism would provide a more complete version of reality since the restrictions related to one language can be compensated for by using another language.

2.1.3.2 The Paradoxes of Multilingualism

Linguistic diversity can occur within a language through dialects, for instance. Multilingualism can therefore indicate the coexistence of foreign languages as well as differences within one language (Taylor-Batty 9). Because internal variation is inherent to every language, multilingualism can be interpreted as “a universal linguistic reality (i.e. that ‘multilingualism is everywhere’)” (9). Consequently, multilingualism seems “natural” and just as normal as variation within one particular language (11). Alternatively, multilingualism can be associated with an abnormal, isolated presentation; which readers may find “shocking;” the notion then appears “unnatural” or “artificial” (Taylor-Batty 9). Accordingly, there are two responses to multilingualism; one calls to mind a sense of the familiar, the other the unfamiliar.

In modernist works these contrasting views are often dealt with through “interlingual encounters and cosmopolitan polyglot figures,” set in “typically modernist conditions of travel, migration and exile” (Taylor-Batty 11). This is also the case in Hemingway’s For Whom the Bell Tolls, in which Robert Jordan travels to Spain in order to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Here, he finds himself in a different linguistic situation, obliged to speak Spanish, which is demonstrated through the author’s use of language in the novel. During the modernist period, these forms of multilingualism still caused “defamiliarisation” in the reader; readers were not accustomed to it, although they may not have experienced it as shocking per se (Taylor-Batty 10). The Spanish language incorporated in Hemingway’s novel functions in the same way.
2.1.4 Multilingualism and Modernism

Critics have associated modernism with transnationalism and multilingualism in recent literary studies (Taylor-Batty 4). During the modernist period, a “linguistic turn” takes place, which implies an interest in “the construction of meaning” (Bell 16). Accordingly, “the medium,” in which art is created becomes central and language is transformed into the focal point in literature. In fact, language is thought to be shaping the world instead of “describing or reflecting” it (16). Consequently, the “linguistic turn” in modernist literature might well be described as a ‘multilingual turn’” (Taylor-Batty 4). Modernist literature, therefore, emphasizes the coexistence of and interrelation between multiple languages.

Taylor-Batty defines “textual multilingualism” as a way to represent a multilingual situation by representing the “characters’ language(s)” directly, by depicting “language learners[‘]” speech, by describing a polylingual immigrant environment or finally, by using a translated English infected by remnants of its source language (6). She categorizes the “Hispanicised English” Hemingway uses as an example of the last option, which suggests that the English representation of the Spanish language is an incomplete translation (6). Although the novel is mostly written in English, the spoken language is Spanish.

During the modernist period, authors used translation to deal with multilingual situations and realized its potential “as a literary mode” (Yao 2). Moreover, modernists were fascinated with languages and cultural customs other than their own as they shed new light on their own background (Yao 5). This fascination was proven by the publication of an enormous amount of translations in the period, besides “the explicitly multi-linguistic dimensions of so many major Modernist texts” (5). With translation strategies, modernist writers aimed for a “cultural renewal,” that combined a continuation and a breakaway from traditional writing techniques (6). Translation allowed them “to extend the limits of English itself, which in turn led them to discover new possibilities for their own expression” (7). Furthermore, they used methods of translation in their own writings in order to make the reader think critically (8). This is applicable to Hemingway’s novel, since the translation of Spanish to English allows the author to play with the English language in such a way that its meaning is widened while attempting to establish a sense of what the Spanish culture and language entail.
2.1.5 The Representational Means For Multilingualism

Meir Sternberg’s article, “Polylingualism and Translation as Mimesis,” provides the reader with terms that explain an author’s method of depiction when representing multilingualism in literary works.

Polylingualism “widened [writers’] range of both materials and devices,” which caused the emergence of certain complex developments (Sternberg 221). Namely, authors can replace a phrase in the native language by a foreign one or can incorporate another language directly into the native language (221). Hemingway, for instance, adopts these techniques in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. A new “interest in the language of reality and the reality of language” challenges writers who want to depict a multilingual environment by using one language, which calls for elaborate experimental writing on the author’s part (221-22). There is an “interlingual tension between language as represented object (within the original or reported speech-event);” that is, language as the topic or item that is being portrayed, “and language as representational means (within the reporting speech-event);” namely, language as the method used to depict a certain object (222). This tension’s function is “mimetic” or imitating instead of “communicative” (222). In other words, this difference in the way language is used serves to indicate its qualities of simulation.

2.1.5.1 Translational Mimesis

According to Sternberg, there are three ways to avoid the problematic representation of “heterolingual or translational mimesis” (223), which suggests the simulation of a multilingual situation through translation.

First, “referential restriction” implies that the representation is limited to one “linguistically uniform community” that shares the same language as the implied audience (Sternberg 223). Although *For Whom the Bell Tolls* contains a specific community, namely a band of Spanish guerilla fighters, Robert Jordan does not belong to this community. This does away with this unilingual starting point. Moreover, the implied audience is unfamiliar with Spanish. Referential restriction simplifies the polylingual situation “in realistic terms, by standardizing the imitated object” (224). This aspect of referential restriction is not applicable to Hemingway’s novel either, since the Spanish language is not standardized to such an extent that it is considered to be normal by the reader.
The second strategy is “vehicular matching,” which accepts “linguistic diversity or conflict” as normal and as a part “of communication” (Sternberg 223). It adapts “the variations in the representational medium to the variations in the represented object” (223). That is to say, foreign languages are inserted directly as they are uttered by speakers in reality (224). Through a mimetic reproduction and quotation of the original speech, this technique achieves “as perfect a correspondence as possible between the signified polylingualism of reality and the signifying polylingualism of the text” (224). Hemingway employs this representational technique in his novel; he introduces Spanish sentences directly into his writing. Artists can object to the use of vehicular matching, since it does not always represent communicative situations in a realistic way. Furthermore, the expectations of the author and readers’ multilingual skills are too high; they may not understand the narrative (225). In *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the reader may not be able to grasp the meaning of certain complex Spanish phrases that occur without translation in the novel.

The third strategy, the “homogenizing convention,” interprets the “resultant variations in the language presumably spoken by characters as an irrelevant, if not distracting, representational factor” (224). Just like referential restriction, this strategy simplifies the linguistic situation (224). However, the polylingual situation is represented as a unilingual one, whereas referential restriction represents a unilingual object through a unilingual medium. Furthermore, there is an impediment of the realistic representation of a polylingual environment because it simply ignores it and represents the situation in a monolingual way (225). *For Whom the Bell Tolls* falls partially in this category, since Hemingway translates the Spanish speech to English. However, the multilingual environment is not completely represented in a monolingual manner, since the author introduces the Spanish language directly as well.

### 2.1.5.2 Types of Translational Mimesis

There are four representational techniques of multilingual discourse through “mimetic compromise” or “translational mimesis,” which can be situated on a continuum between vehicular matching and homogenizing convention (Sternberg 225). The types of mimetic translation mentioned here cannot be separated completely from one another and “coexist and interact with the others in a given textual framework” (232). Different types of translation
techniques can therefore be found in the same text, as is the case in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

2.1.5.2.1 Selective Reproduction

One type of translational mimesis is “[s]elective reproduction,” which consists of the insertion of a “quotation from the original heterolingual discourse as uttered by the speaker(s), or in literature, as supposed to have been uttered by the fictive speaker(s)” (Sternberg 225).

The “mimetic cliché” is an instance of selective reproduction. This representation often takes the form of an interjection associated with a certain sociolinguistic community, which makes the reader realize that a sense of “otherness” is created through language (Sternberg 226). Hemingway’s use of the Spanish interjection “Qué va,” for example, functions as a mimetic cliché.

A reproduction remains a representation of reality and therefore need not be precise, whether it is intended by the author or not (Sternberg 227). This can also be said about language in Hemingway’s novel, since the depiction of Spanish is not always correct. Still, it need not be, when the author’s main goal is to give the reader an impression of the language. Although a reproduction seems linguistically accurate, it may still misrepresent or manipulate the source language it depicts (227). Accordingly, the reader may not have the bilingual skills to interpret the translation correctly, even if it does not necessarily impede the understanding of the text. In addition, the translational representation is not necessarily true to the original speech event.

2.1.5.2.2 Verbal Transposition

A second type of translational mimesis is “verbal transposition,” in which a “poetic or communicative twist [is] given to what sociolinguists call bilingual interference” (Sternberg 227). It is considered to be indirect, since it uses a “unilingual medium” to represent a multilingual discourse instead of inserting the original “speech” literally (227). The narrator’s translation influences the representation, since the elements of speech need to be adapted to “the target language,” of which some characteristics may differ from “the source language” (227).
The “translational interference” caused by the interlingual conflict between the original version and the translation can take the form of “phonic or orthographic” peculiarities, which can reflect the intonation of the foreigner’s native language; “grammatical irregularity and ill-formedness” which can emerge through the transition from one language to another (Sternberg 227); and “lexical deviance” (228). The latter can be found in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in “the literally rendered Spanish idioms” (228) such as the phrase “[t]hat we should win the war” (Hemingway 259).

Verbal transposition as a form of mimesis can contain “verbal tension, deviance and incompatibility” in monolingual speech depending on the “reporter’s” accurate or questionable rendition of the multilingual phrase (Sternberg 228). This strategy complicates communication since it uses elements of both languages represented. Consequently, the multilingual utterances and phrases becomes more independent (228). Mistakes supposedly made by the author can be a “covert interlingual and interperspectival montage” put forward by the narrator. The latter then combines “the codes of the frame (inhabited by himself and his audience) and the inset (inhabited by the fictive speaker and *his* addressee)” on purpose in order to ensure the depiction is lively and intricate (228). Yet, not all multilingual writings serve as a representation of a polylingual situation, multilingual speech can also be used as a “medium.” A writer can appeal to these techniques of translation as a writing method even if there is no real translation involved. Multilingualism in writing therefore need not be a “mimetic transposition” (228).

2.1.5.2.3 Conceptual Reflection

“Conceptual reflection,” the third way to deal with translational mimesis, distances itself more from the original utterance and focuses on “socio-cultural norms;” it “lies at the crossroads of language and reality” (Sternberg 230). Consequently, it forces the reader to keep in mind various reading strategies. The socio-cultural aspect can be accomplished through “linguistic” or “grammatical” elements (230). Hemingway’s use of unidiomatic English can function in a way to represent the Spanish characters in the novel as a primitive people, for example. Nevertheless, conceptual reflection more often attempts to capture multilingualism through cultural themes, concerns, positions and indirect references than by using linguistic or grammatical techniques (231).
2.1.5.2.4 Explicit Attribution

The last type of translational mimesis is “[e]xplicit attribution,” which consists of “a direct statement on the reporter’s (or even the reportee’s) part concerning the language [...] in which the reported speech was originally made” (Sternberg 231). For instance, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the main character Robert Jordan is very aware of language and more than once comments on it. Accordingly, the narrator’s representation can entail a “pure narrational ‘telling’” instead of a mimetical “showing” of the multilingual speech either completely or partially (231). When the representation is provided by a bilingual speaker and the language that is used is not explicitly clarified, there is no way for the reader to know in which language the conversation is taking place (231-232).

2.1.6 Multilingual Versus Multidialectal Representations

Lawrence Rosenwald opposes Sternberg’s opinion that “the literary representation of the multilingual world and that of the multidialectal world are essentially similar” (5). He distinguishes between representations of dialects and languages (Rosenwald 19). When multiple languages are represented together, readers become aware of the fact that their personal “speech community” is not the only one in existence. Rosenwald argues that vehicular matching can easily be used when dealing with various dialects, but not so much in the case of languages (Rosenwald 6-7).

“[H]eterophone languages” have the same writing system, but are pronounced differently or have a different meaning. When writers transcribe them, it affects the reception of the language, in particular its inferior status to the “dominant language,” whether the writer intended it or not (10). Rosenwald distinguishes between multilingualism employed according to their literary genre whereas critics like Sternberg treat representations in various literary genres in the same way. Characters can speak languages in function of communication in narrative texts; still, at the same time, languages can become a conversational topic in themselves (11-12).

Rosenwald values a truthful “depiction of linguistic reality” (13). Consequently, first, the reader should question the author’s representation of reality in order to determine the quality and value of the work. The precision of the linguistic representation influences his or her impression of the author’s competence (14). Second, languages are considered to be equal
by most people, but not by all. When writers compare languages in order to define their worth, this provides the reader with information concerning the writer’s “imaginative generosity” (Rosenwald 17). Although differences between languages exist, “creating a value-hierarchy of languages” or “denying that a particular language is a language at all” is wrong (18). When writers fail to present these languages after critical consideration in literature, the resulting work is linguistically racist (18).

The aim of literature, in Rosenwald’s opinion, is to give a voice to all characters by sharing their point of view in their native language. If a depiction of a foreign language implies it is limited in its reference or emotion or when a comparison is made with “non-semiotic systems as animal noises or music or gesture,” literature does not fulfill its goal (18). This idea seems problematic, since it is possible that an author decides not to give a voice to a certain character. In Hemingway’s For Whom the Bell Tolls, the characters are able to share their opinions in Spanish, although this is not as obvious since their speech is transferred to English. Robert Jordan may not be able to voice his opinion in English so that the others understand him, but he can still do so in Spanish. This suggests that Rosenwald’s focus on the expression in the native language is too restricted. Still, readers should be critical when determining whether a translation is a truthful representation because the author’s depiction might entail a certain ideology. Hemingway’s novel contains idealizing elements, since the Spanish characters are indirectly represented as primitive, yet honorable people. Although they are highly respected for their way of life in the novel, the association with noble savages calls to mind a certain inferiority, which the author may not have intended. The author’s ideology does emerge in the language’s depiction; still, this ideology need not be entirely negative as Rosenwald intimates.

2.2 Modernist Features of For Whom the Bell Tolls

Because modernists were interested in “the nature of their medium,” writers became intrigued by “language itself” (Bell 16). The concept of the “linguistic ‘turn’” emerged, which implies that language contributes to the construction of the world, instead of the other way around (Bell 16). One of the features of modernism connected to language is the “radical linguistic experiment,” which is often based on the intention of alarming or agitating the audience (Levenson 3). Hemingway’s use of language in For Whom the Bell Tolls reflects this modernist characteristic, since the author attempts to call to mind the Spanish language
by experimenting with its form. In the meantime, he evokes a feeling of unfamiliarity in the reader. In addition, during the modernist period, both “form and content” are valued, since each aspect of a work has an impact and is “therefore open to technical revision” (Levenson 3). Hemingway achieves the simulation of the Spanish language and culture through the novel’s content, which tells the story of a band of guerilla fighters hiding in the mountains during the Spanish Civil War as well as through formal techniques that invoke the language and characterize the people.

Many modernist writers were disillusioned by events that occurred during the era in which they lived; therefore “figures of nihilism, of degeneration and despair, circulate quickly” in art (Levenson 4-5). This is also the case in the novel, because from the beginning the author prepares the reader for the fatal ending of the story. Robert Jordan suffers from a “loss of faith” that is also associated with modernity since it is an era characterized by the “violence of war” (Levenson 5). Consequently, people started to lose their religious beliefs (5), which is the case for Anselmo in the novel. He believes that there cannot be a God because of the things he has seen in his life (Hemingway 44). Michael Levenson describes modernist writers as “connoisseurs of irony” (5) and also this characteristic can be found in the novel, as explained by Fernando’s fate or the use of the verb “molest” in order to avoid upsetting Maria, which will be dealt with further on in this paper.

During the modernist era, people started to reflect on “the present civilization” and the life “tribal peoples” led. The original view, in which “‘primitive’ peoples had been seen, whether nostalgically or condescendingly, as a simpler version of the ‘civilized’” (Bell 20) made place for the idea that these people merely had “a different way of thinking and relating to the universe” (Bell 21). Hemingway’s view on the Spanish people in For Whom the Bell Tolls is similar, since Robert Jordan’s characterization of them takes after the notion of the noble savage. Michael Bell describes these primitive people as partaking in “the practice of sympathetic magic” (21). Pilar believes in this kind of magic, since she reads Robert Jordan’s hand (Hemingway 35).

In short, various modernist features emerge in Hemingway’s For Whom the Bell Tolls, in particular those related to linguistic aspects.
3 Ernest Hemingway and Spain

3.1 The Author’s Biographical Background

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, a suburb of Chicago in 1899. His father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, was connected to the medical world (Reynolds 16-17) and his mother, Grace-Hall Hemingway, was a composer and music teacher with a lively personality. Hemingway would later blame her for his father’s suicide in 1928 (Reynolds 18-19). The author’s work as a “cub reporter” for the Kansas City Star formed the basis for his later writing style (Reynolds 22). Hemingway was a volunteer ambulance driver for the American Red Cross in the First World War. However, he was injured within weeks and returned to America after a long recovery in a hospital in Milan (23).

Hemingway married Hadley Richardson in 1921 and they moved to Paris in 1922 (Reynolds 23-24), which meant the beginning of his expatriate experience in Europe (Reynolds 22-23). In Paris, he wrote newspaper articles and gave his readers advice on “how to live well in another country” (25). Hemingway was in touch with all the American expatriate authors in Paris (Reynolds 28). Still, because of Hadley’s pregnancy, they moved to Toronto, where their son John Hadley Nicanor (“Bumby”) was born in 1923 (Reynolds 26-27). After his birth, the family returned to Paris, where Hemingway was increasingly seen as a talented writer.

Hemingway had an affair with Pauline Pfeiffer whom he married in 1927 after he had divorced Hadley (Reynolds 30). His second son, Patrick, was born in 1928 in America. In 1930, the family moved to Key West (31). Hemingway went on an African safari in 1933 and he reported the Spanish Civil War in 1937 (33-34). These events would later inspire his writing.

In Spain, Hemingway had an affair with Martha Gellhorn, which led to the end of his marriage with Pauline in 1939 (Reynolds 33-34). Hemingway then went to Cuba with his fishing boat, the Pilar, where he met up with Martha and started to write For Whom the Bell Tolls, which he finished in 1940 (34).

Hemingway divorced Martha in 1944 and began an affair with Mary Welsh Monks, shortly afterwards. After reporting on the Second World War from Paris (Reynolds 41), Hemingway returned to Cuba, where he married Mary in 1946 (43). After a long period without any publication of literary work, he wrote The Old Man and the Sea (Reynolds 45),
which contributed to his winning of the Nobel Prize in 1954. He did not receive the award personally, because he was too ill to travel to Stockholm (46). From this moment on, the author’s life consisted of periods of “euphoric writing and paranoia-ridden depression” (46). After receiving treatment for various problems, Hemingway committed suicide in 1962 (Baker, “Hemingway” 211).

3.2 Hemingway, the Author, and His Major Works

Hemingway has written “stories and novels so starkly moving that some have become a permanent part of our cultural inheritance” (Reynolds 15). The author became “synonymous with American writer” in the beginning of the twenty-first century (Wagner-Martin 3). His life seems an example of the American Dream, which implies that “with good fortune, hard work, talent, ambition, and a little ruthlessness a man can create himself in the image of his choosing” (Reynolds 15). Through his own creation of a “public persona,” Hemingway became a kind of icon; however, he found it hard to keep up appearances later in his lifetime (15). Still, even then, “the image of Papa Hemingway outdoors, fishing or hunting or at war” (Donaldson 5) overshadowed the idea of the man as a writer, since Hemingway wished to be known for his writing as well as for being “a rugged manly fellow” (Donaldson 10).

Hemingway started his writing career working for the Kansas City Star, attracted by the idealistic view of the reporter “as crime fighter” (Reynolds 22). Later, he became a foreign correspondent for the Toronto Star (23-24). His work abroad served as inspiration for “character types, themes, and images,” which he would resort to his entire life (Reynolds 26). Moreover, it contributed to his notion that writing should be characterized by “clarity, simplicity, and strength of statement and expression” (Norris 319). Hemingway also wrote fictional works. His first publication was Three Stories and Ten Poems (1923), which counted “only sixty-four pages” (Baker, “Hemingway” 204).

The author’s main influence for his first short story collection, In Our Time (1925) was Dubliners by James Joyce (Reynolds 29). Not only the writing in this collection is great, but also its composition, since every story forms “a piece of a larger picture, rather like a Cubist painting” (Baker, “Hemingway” 205).

The Sun Also Rises (1926) became Hemingway’s “breakthrough novel” (Reynolds 30). It became a signature work “of the newest American fiction – terse, tough, and shocking in its subject matter” (Wagner-Martin 4), as it depicted the First World War’s impact on an
entire generation through its characters (Baker, “Hemingway” 206). The protagonist, Jake Barnes, has been wounded in the war, which has caused his impotence. Barnes’ wound “represents a physical manifestation of what the other characters suffer emotionally;” they are unable to live life to the fullest (206). The topic enhanced the popularity of the novel, appealing to anyone who had been faced with the war and its “moral and spiritual vacuum” (207).

In his second collection of short stories, *Men Without Women* (1927), Hemingway expresses his belief that “no taboo words,” nor “forbidden subjects” exist as illustrated in many of the stories’ controversial content (Reynolds 30). In addition, the work demonstrates Hemingway’s manliness; “the writer was a man’s man; a tough hunter, fisherman, war veteran; a man who could take women or leave them on his own terms” (Wagner-Martin 5).

*A Farewell to Arms* (1929) was a bestseller (Reynolds 31). The protagonist, Frederic Henry, was like Hemingway an American who volunteered to drive ambulances during World War I (Baker 207). In line with, *The Sun Also Rises*, this novel portrays “the frustrations and anxieties of postwar Europe” and a tragic love story caused by the war (208).

Hemingway went on to write *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), a work of non-fiction about the bullfight, which was, nonetheless, hard to classify, because of “its multiple voices, its stories within the narrative, and its factual framework” (Reynolds 32). Moreover, some critics like Lincoln Kirstein interpret this work as “a spiritual autobiography,” or “a study of manners” in Spain (59). Hemingway “intended [it] as an introduction to the modern Spanish bullfight” and sought to describe it “both emotionally and practically” (Hemingway qtd. in Kinnamon 51).

*Winner Take Nothing* (1933) was another collection of short stories that “was even more abrasive to the prevailing American moral view of itself” (Reynolds 32). In the next years, Hemingway wrote *Green Hills of Africa* (1935) and “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” (Reynolds 33).

Hemingway supported “the Loyalist cause” during the Spanish Civil War and lent a hand in making *The Spanish Earth*, “a short film about the effects of the war in Spain on its people” (Baker, “Hemingway” 209). Furthermore, he wrote a play, *The Fifth Column* (1938), and a novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), on the same topic (Reynolds 34). The novel’s protagonist Robert Jordan goes to Spain “to volunteer his services to those fighting against the fascist forces of Generalissimo Francisco Franco” (Baker, “Hemingway” 209). Jordan realizes through his meeting with the guerrilleros that both sides of the conflict “commit acts of betrayal and brutality,” which did not please the Republic’s supporters (209).
Hemingway’s last novel, *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), confirmed his reputation indefinitely (Baker, “Hemingway” 210). It united the theme of the disastrous meeting of man and nature with the “stylistic clarity” associated with his early short stories (Taylor 765). This novel forms the core of Hemingway’s writing style, since its story is simple, yet “told with detailed accuracy and close attention to natural beauty” (Baker, “Hemingway” 210). Its richness arises from its “straightforward presentation of the tragic dignity of all living things” (210). The protagonist, Santiago, symbolizes the notion that “[a] man can be destroyed but not defeated” (Hemingway qtd. in Baker, “Hemingway” 211).

*A Moveable Feast* (1964) was published posthumously and based on Hemingway’s experience as a young man living in Paris (Baker, “Hemingway” 211). In Keith Taylor’s opinion, it “is one of the best books we have about a writer’s discovery of his craft” (Taylor 765).

### 3.3 Writing Style

Some of the themes Hemingway uses throughout his writing career are: “fishing, camping, eating, money, traveling, bullfighting, politics, expatriates, and war, to name a few” (Dewberry 23). The author’s oeuvre comprises writings pertaining to all kinds of genres (Reynolds 32).

Hemingway’s early work clearly demonstrates his ability to express complex emotions in simple and straightforward words (Donaldson 13). As a reporter with the *Kansas City Star*, he was introduced to “the Star’s stylebook,” which entails “110 rules of prose usage” (Baker, “Hemingway” 201). Hemingway remembered these rules, which stressed the value of “short sentences” and paragraphs, the use of dynamic English, the preference of “be[ing] positive, not negative” and the avoidance of redundant words in all his further writing (201). This style ruled by an appreciation of “efficiency” results in conciseness and adjectives’ omission and shaped Hemingway’s writing (Tichi 477). “Vigor” associated with “verbal economy” can be attained when each word contributes to a comprehensive composition (478).

The wish to include the reader more actively in the narrative world is a prominent feature of Hemingway’s writing as well. As Hemingway himself puts it:
It is always how to write truly and having found out what is true to project it in such a way
that it becomes a part of the experience of the person who reads it. (Hemingway qtd. in Baker,
*Writer as Artist* 224).

According to Allen Josephs, Hemingway’s “use of the second person to personalize third-
person narration” characterizes this technique. This allows the reader to become more
involved in the event that the author aims to portray (228). In addition, Hemingway’s famous
“iceberg theory” can be interpreted as a means to encourage the reader’s involvement. This
method is based on the following notion:

> If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he
knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things
as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due
to only one-eighth of it being above water. (Hemingway qtd. in Taylor 764)

This “theory of omission” suggests that “what the writer intentionally leaves out actually
strengthens the writing” (Josephs 233). Hemingway’s “endurance as a storyteller” is due to
his encouraging of the reader’s cooperation in “the creation of the story” (Baker,
“Hemingway” 212). Consequently, his work is experienced differently by each reader
depending on their own life stories (212).

3.4 Hemingway as an Expatriate

The concept of “the expatriate or self-exile” is based on the element of “rejection of a
homeland” in combination with “the desire for and acceptance of an alternative place” (Pizer
1). Disappointment concerning the country of origin causes people to move to another place
in the hope of improving their situation. Many American writers were drawn to Europe as a
place of freedom “where one could be true to one’s feelings” without taking into account
what is favored by the community (Pizer 5). The wish to express emotions stems from the
difficulties many American soldiers who fought in Europe during World War I experienced
accepting the falsities that had been communicated to Americans at home about the war.
Hemingway was one of them and struggled to accept “the convention of the lie in wartime”
(Pizer 4); he wanted to share his own experience at the front (Pizer 3-4).
Hemingway was intrigued by Europe and moved to Paris with his wife Hadley. There, he was in touch with Ezra Pound, Sylvia Beach, and Gertrude Stein among others. Furthermore, he assisted Ford Madox Ford with the publishing of the *transatlantic review* (Reynolds 27-28). The author was admired in Paris, because of his confidence, energy, “[interest] in everything and anyone,” and his love of “laughing and joking among his café friends” (Reynolds 28). The group of artists known as the “Lost Generation” appreciated Hemingway’s writing, because it combined “content, attitude and expression” in a particular way (Straumann 5).

“Ernest Hemingway wrote about many places;” still, Spain affected him more than any other place (Josephs 221). The author “claimed to like Spain better than any country except his own, and privately he said he loved Spain more than any place” (221). Josephs insists that this preference for Spain stems from his love of nature, which he shared with the country’s inhabitants, in contrast with “modernity or progress” (222). Hemingway described Spain as being “unspoiled,” “tough and wonderful” (qtd. in Josephs 223). He encountered “the most profound resonance of his own soul” in the country (Josephs 240). Furthermore, his understanding and assimilation of “the Spanish temperament” shaped “his theory of tragedy,” his heroes, and his morals, which were considered peculiar or even “vulgar or barbaric to many non-Spanish readers” (Kinnamon 45). Although Hemingway’s connection with Spain diminished later on in his life, the country’s effect on him was permanent; his work would not be the same “without Spain” and its values (Josephs 227).

Some critics like Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera¹, however, believe the relationship between Hemingway and Spain to be idealized. Hemingway stayed enamored with Spain throughout his entire lifetime, which Herlihy-Mera denotes as “an experiment in transnationalization” (84). Nevertheless, Spanish people often mocked the author’s self-attributed “insider status” in bullfighting environments as well as his limited competence speaking the language (84). José Castillo-Puche, a friend of Hemingway’s and his biographer, claims that later in life, “he had become a sort of joke, in fact” in Spain (qtd. in Herlihy-Mera 84). Moreover, Hemingway’s view of Spain was based on only a few short visits he made, and the “limited number of people” he met, in addition to the fact that his experience was channeled subconsciously by “age, native language, gender, and social capital, as well as his developing ability to use and understand the Spanish languages” (Herlihy-Mera 85). Because Hemingway’s time spent in Spain was so short, he was unable to get past the stage of

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¹ Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera and Jeffrey Herlihy are the same person. However, I will refer to him as Herlihy-Mera, since that is the name he used to publish the most recent article cited in this analysis.
“euphoria, enchantment, fascination and enthusiasm,” during which people are unable to see anything but the positive in the newly discovered space (Eckerman et al qtd. in Herlihy-Mera 85). Nor did he have time to experience a “culture shock” (Marx qtd in Herlihy-Mera 85). Furthermore, he based his idea of “Spanishness” on a social group, which mainly consisted of “male, upper-middle-class toreros, aficionados, and their affiliates” (86). The author’s Spanish is also related to the north of Spain. Consequently, his perspective does not encompass Spanish society in its entirety (86).

Speaking “a foreign language” is a significant step for an expatriate in the “process of acculturation” (Herlihy-Mera 88). Hemingway believed there were two kinds of expatriates: “the resident and the tourist.” He classified himself as pertaining to the category of the resident, who understood the values of a foreign place and learned the language (Sanders 137-38). Knowing these foreign language allowed him to blend in socially (Herlihy-Mera 89). Nevertheless, Spanish critics think that Hemingway’s novels, in particular The Sun Also Rises and For Whom the Bell Tolls, demonstrate the author’s superficial understanding of “things Spanish” (Herlihy-Mera 93).

This criticism on Hemingway’s Spanish, his writing about the Spanish traditions, and his fictional rendition of the civil war, must have weakened the author’s enthusiasm and love for all things Spanish (Herlihy-Mera 94). These Spanish reactions, may have been the reason why he “never lived in Spain” and knew from “the 1930s that the transnational quest had its limits” (96). Hemingway realized that he was too old when he first came to Spain for his experiences to “become truly integral parts of his identity – regardless of his interest, dedication to rituals, and knowledge, he could not become Spanish ” (97).

3.4.1 Hemingway’s Transnational Archetype

One of the main themes in Hemingway’s work is the foreign background of his protagonists (Herlihy 1). Depending on what the reader already knows about and how familiar or unfamiliar he or she is with the unknown setting and people, the effect of the foreign environment will differ (Herlihy 3). Hemingway’s characters who find themselves abroad resemble the author himself because they are still bound to their native country. As a result, they feel “alone,” abandoned, and set aside from others (4). Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera calls this feature of Hemingway’s writing his “transnational archetype,” since the protagonist “is a man abroad” (Herlihy 4). In addition, his contact “with the non-native society” determines the
The character wants to become a part of the new community or "transnationalize" through behavior that is not on par with that of his place of origin and therefore implies the wish to construct "a new sense of identity" (4). However, this attempt will fail, since the character is "too developed in a psychosomatic sense to existentially alter his sense of collective identity through transcultural adoptions" (4) when introduced to the foreign society. In other words, because a certain national identity has already been shaped, the character is unable to cast it aside completely and adopt a new, foreign identity instead. Accordingly, the foreigner will not be accepted in the new social group whatever the extent of his or her loyalty, since this acceptance is determined by elements he or she cannot control (4). The protagonist’s “expatriate and immigrant” position suggest a “cultural displacement”, which indicates “ethnic, linguistic, and social otherness” (5). This influences the communication between the foreigner and the new national environment he enters (5).

A lot of the “pathos” of Hemingway’s writing emerges as a result of “the linguistic, social, and cultural challenges,” when someone is removed from their native home (Herlihy 5). Furthermore, the themes of his works are often connected with the difficulties brought about by this non-native setting in which the protagonist finds himself. These foreign settings allow the author to isolate the protagonist socio-culturally, which causes his or her further alienation (5). The character’s displacement may lead to his attempt to “[participate] in one cultural system and ostensibly [abandon] another” (5-6). “[C]ultural displacement” implies that the protagonist goes through four steps in a foreign community (Herlihy 9). First, the protagonist dismisses the native community in order to “escape to another cultural context,” which forms the second step. Then, he or she adopts foreign or unfamiliar behavior to find “new values” (9). This attempt at assimilation results in the fourth step, which implies the “final irony that in spite of the intentions to merge with the new society,” the undertaking is quickly abandoned because complications arise that are “beyond the control of the protagonist” (9).

The protagonists’ struggle to appropriate “patterns of foreign behavior to regulate their sense of self” separated from their place of origin contributes to their emotional drama (Herlihy 13). Moreover, the “foreignness” of the main characters enables Hemingway to find “meaning through the perspective of intercultural experiences” (13). The foreign setting helps the narrative move forward and provides it with “life and identity” (13). In addition, “multicultural characters” symbolize technological progress, which enables people to travel further and faster than ever before (13). Consequently, they are exposed to other cultures in such a way that it might cause them to lose touch with their own community. Furthermore
their perceptions of identity and roots change (13). Nevertheless, Herlihy-Mera, like Robert Jarrett, believes that a person cannot simply choose an identity, because this “choice of identity is limited by the influences of personality, geography, and culture” (Jarrett qtd. in Herlihy 13). Because external factors determine someone’s identity, a person cannot take complete charge of his or her own identity, nor can he or she switch to another one just as “Hemingway’s protagonist cannot, in the end, choose his identity” (Herlihy 14). Finally, the protagonist has to accept the inability to comprehend the “foreign world” entirely and to become part of it (14).

3.4.2 The Socio-Historical Context of the Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936 and ended in 1939 (Valis 7). Although the war was “[a] national conflict,” it had an extensive “international significance,” since it was considered to be “the military and ideological testing ground” (Valis 7) and the “prelude to a war on a much larger scale” (Monteath xi). The opposing sides of the battlefield consisted of “Fascists and Communists, liberals and conservatives” (Valis 7). On the one hand, people in favor of Franco’s regime termed the Republican opposition the “Reds, or rojos” (8) and feared that if they failed to win the war, the Communists would take over. Leftist supporters, on the other hand, romanticized the Second Republic (8), which lasted from 1931 till 1936 (Muste 12). Foreigners who volunteered to join the war agreed that it was necessary, since they supported the good side; yet, they were able to see the outcome of the Spanish Civil War on an international scale (Valis 8). Because of the ideals at stake, many people thought this war would be the last chance to fight for them, since the alternatives of fascism or Communism were unimaginable (Valis 7). Accordingly, Francisco Franco found support in Germany and Italy, whereas the Republic formed an alliance with the Soviet Union (7). In the meantime, “Britain, France and the United States” watched from the sidelines (Monteath xii-xiii). In For Whom the Bell Tolls, the Soviet Union’s support comes to the fore in the character of General Golz, who is a Russian general leading an attack against the fascists.

The Popular Front won the elections in 1936 and their supporters immediately required a decrease of the Church’s influence (Muste 12). However, half the country completely opposed these propositions (12). The government quickly declined, which resulted in friction and a growing hostility between the opposing sides (Valis 7). Chaos broke out: there were murders, “reprisals, strikes, street fights” and so on (Muste 12). The army and the
national police started a revolt (Muste 13). These army rebellions were common in Spain’s history, so Franco’s uprising was seen as yet another “pronunciamiento, or military coup” (Valis 7-8). Nevertheless, this military uprising differed from others because of the context in which it took place. First, the emergence of a Republican Spain in 1931 implied progress and modernization, but was faced with a lot of opposition. As a result, tension between classes, religious differences, and liberal and conservative ideologies arose (Valis 8). Second, left and right-wing parties became increasingly polarized on a global scale (8); Hitler and Mussolini became fascist dictators in Germany and Italy, while in the Soviet Union, Stalin started reorganizing the Communist Party (8).

Trade unions and liberal parties appealed to the government to provide them with means to fight. Because of their action, parts of the country continued to be governed by the Republic (13). These unions and parties had more power in certain areas than the government, which resulted in a “revolution from the left” (13). There were a lot of casualties, but eventually the “anarchic situation” was curbed by Madrid, which had a firmer hold on Loyalist Spain (14). Meanwhile, the right side of the conflict moved from the south towards the north up to Madrid where the offensive slowed down, because the Loyalists had received foreign help (14). From this moment on, the border between the opposing sides was stabilized and both sides prepared for the continuing battle (Muste 15).

The international intervention was crucial for the war’s outcome, since both sides obtained supplies and weapons from their allies (Muste 17-18). The war’s conclusion was also influenced by internal political conflicts that existed among the Loyalists, which weakened their offensive (Muste 19). “[R]evolutions within revolutions” occurred, because of the Loyalist diversity, which prevented the side from becoming a united front against Franco’s supporters (19). The right-wing side was also faced with internal diversity of “Falangists,” “Monarchists,” and “Carlists” (Muste 22). Still, the army was in charge and Franco was able to unite these parties “in a new Falange, with himself as its leader” (22-23). Russian abandonment of the Loyalist cause in 1938 also brought the Falange closer to its goal. It was clear that those in favor of the military revolt were in an advantageous position from the very start of the civil war (23). The war’s conclusion led to the survivors’ decision to stay of their own accord or obligatorily in Spain, governed by the dictator Franco, who would be in command for almost 40 years (Monteath xi).
3.4.3 The Spanish Civil War in Literature and in Hemingway’s Writing

The Spanish Civil War as an internal dispute had great consequences for western society (Muste 6). It was seen as “the ultimate battleground for democracy, freedom, modernity, and art against reaction, oppression, censorship, old power, and repressive (especially religious, Roman Catholic) tradition” (Cunningham 185). With the emergence of fascism in Europe, people in favor of the Left wanted writers to take a stand against this ideology (185). Because culture and art were associated with the faction of the Republic, many of its supporters were the most gifted authors and artists at the time (186-87). Therefore, the civil war inspired an extensive variety of art works as “national and international responses” (Valis 8). Literature on the Spanish Civil War implies an inevitably “subjective and ambiguously mediated” representation (Valis 10), since these literary products represent writers’ idealization as well as their disillusion with this conflict (Muste 10). The war caused many people’s loss of faith in the connection between “politics and literature and the determined commitment to political ideologies” and therefore became a critical moment in “literary history” (Monteath xiii).

The theme of the Spanish Civil War is prominent in Hemingway’s writing at the time (Josephs 236). The author assisted in the war by paying “for ambulances for the Spanish Republic,” besides reporting on the conflict for the *North American Newspaper Alliance* (Josephs 225). Hemingway’s “being-thereness” is characteristic of these representations of the Spanish Civil War (Cunningham 191). Many of the reporters in favor of the Republican side did not shy away from exposing the brutality of the people they supported. This is clarified in the scene, in which the republicans “[force] local fascists over the cliffs” in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (192).

The theme of the civil war appealed to Hemingway, since it exhibited characteristics incorporated in the author’s previous writing (Gurko 258), such as

two sides fighting with unbridled ferocity, every known variety of cowardice and heroism, characters who were aficionado and characters who were not, and a backdrop of great events against which the fortunes of selected individuals could be projected in dimensions somewhat larger than life. (259)

Hemingway was interested in death as a common thread and the Spanish Civil War implied a new kind of death, since men gave up their lives “for a political cause, for an idealism greater
than their own egos” (259). *For Whom the Bell Tolls*’ protagonist Robert Jordan is one of these men who sacrifice themselves for Spain and their ideals. Like Hemingway himself, “Robert Jordan knows Spain;” he has studied the country and its literature, and constantly considers “Spain and [the] Spanish character” (Sanders 140). In other words, Hemingway does not only deal with the war itself in this novel, but also attempts to give the reader an impression of the country. As Hemingway himself said: “it wasn’t just the Civil War I put into it […] It was everything I had learned about Spain for eighteen years” (Hemingway qtd. in Josephs 238).
4 The Theme of Language in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

The theme of language is indispensable in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, since the novel’s story is set in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. The main character Robert Jordan is an American dynamiter who has been assigned to blow up a bridge with the help of a band of Spanish guerilla fighters. Hemingway portrays the language of these Spanish people and the way Jordan deals with this situation through various techniques. Furthermore, as an outsider, the protagonist is aware of and often reflects on language throughout the novel; he becomes “a center of consciousness explicitly aware of language as an objective thing” (Fenimore 206).

4.1 Language Issues

4.1.1 Spanish as the Spoken Language in the Novel

Hemingway uses a particular kind of English in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Some critics, like John Allen, interpret it as an “unorthodox brand of English” (“English” 6). Most, however, infer that this particular type of language is an English representation of the assumed Spanish speech that lies beneath it. In other words, although the novel is mostly written in English, it is implied that the characters are speaking in Spanish. Edward Fenimore argues that Hemingway aims to bring about in the reader “the tacit assumption that it *is* Spanish, and, based upon this assumption, our acceptance of a non-colloquial English” (Fenimore 210-211). Milton Azevedo shares Fenimore’s opinion. He observes that through experimental linguistics, “Hemingway manipulates English and Spanish syntax and vocabulary to convey the impression that the characters are speaking Spanish” (30). The theory that supposes that the represented language is Spanish seems more plausible when taking into account various indications that emerge throughout the novel. Already in the beginning, Jordan notes that Anselmo “spoke rapidly and furiously in a dialect that Robert Jordan could just follow. It was like reading Quevedo. Anselmo was speaking old Castilian,” after which the narrator gives an English translation of what the character has been saying (Hemingway 13). Furthermore, sometimes it is explicitly mentioned that Jordan is talking in Spanish, through sentences such as “he said it quite formally in Spanish. ‘I care for her very
much” (Hemingway 96) or “[i]t sounded wonderful in Spanish” (Hemingway 207). This especially occurs when Jordan experiences strong emotions when speaking. The first example reflects his feelings for Maria, whereas the second phrase accompanies a surge of happiness related to seeing Anselmo. When, it is not stated as clearly, the reader still experiences the spoken language as Spanish because of other techniques that will be dealt with further along in this analysis.

4.1.2 An Impression of the Spanish Language and Culture

The reader will reach a certain understanding of Spain and its language and culture, yet Hemingway’s limited knowledge only allows him to portray what he himself has seen firsthand (Barea 198). His Spanish is correct in certain conversations and incorrect in others, in Spanish critic Arturo Barea’s opinion (198). Furthermore, Hemingway misrepresents the psychology of Spaniards in the novel. He grasps the meaning of bullfighting and the emotions related to it, for instance, yet fails to comprehend people’s feelings concerning the war (199). While some of the Spanish characters in the novel are truthfully represented, others seem “artificial or out of place” (199). Josephs, in contrast to Spanish critics like Barea, insists that although Hemingway’s novel does not provide the reader with a strictly correct historical report of the civil war, it portrays Hemingway’s personal experience of it in Madrid’s surroundings truthfully (236).

Because the representation of the Spanish Civil War and the Spanish culture is personal, Hemingway calls upon a specific linguistic technique in the novel. Azevedo denominates this newly created written language as “a literary dialect” (30), since it aims to characterize an oral language spoken in a specific place and or by a certain social group in a written text (attributed to Sumner Ives cited in Azevedo 30). Nevertheless, a literary dialect is always fictional and its main goal is not to copy speech but to call it to mind by rearranging some of the language’s more prominent characteristics (Azevedo 30). Consequently, the reader can “go beyond denotative meanings to seek the specific connotations of the speech depicted” (30). Through the author’s manipulated depiction of a language, the reader will be able to separate the outward, superficial meaning that is being symbolized in a word from its deeper meaning that is clarified through the presence of another language. Correspondingly, the language Hemingway produces in For Whom the Bell Tolls qualifies as an example of a literary dialect.
A “literary dialect” suggests that a writer wants to convey a notion or an idea of a language instead of a perfect copy of it. Some Spanish critics disapprove of Hemingway’s Spanish in the novel because it contains errors. However, these critics fail to grasp that the author’s main goal is “to convey an impression rather than faithfully recreate the Spanish language in an English medium” (Azevedo 32). Some of the errors made in Spanish can be explained. The author’s elimination of the “inverted interrogation (¿) and exclamation (¡) marks,” for instance, makes the reading easier, since the implied English-speaking public is not familiar with these grammatical symbols (33). Furthermore, these mistakes are often intentional and serve “a stylistic purpose” (33); they establish a feeling of the unknown, or the unfamiliar for the reader. Through this strategy of “defamiliarization,” Hemingway’s “literary dialect” successfully “draws the readers’ attention to language per se” (33). Accordingly, the objection to the imperfect representation of Spanish is beside the point, since it was the author’s intention to provide the reader with an impression of the Spanish culture and language. Moreover, the mistakes contribute a sense of unfamiliarity in the reader, who is immersed in an unknown culture with a foreign language, in which he or she does not feel quite at home.

The reader needs no full knowledge of the Spanish language to understand the novel. Both “[c]omplete familiarity” and “complete ignorance” of the language would undo the effect the author means to evoke and the deeper meaning suggested through the incorporation of Spanish in the novel (Fenimore 210). What matters is the reader’s realization that, when Hemingway uses a type of “non-colloquial English,” it is the Spanish language that is being spoken (211).

4.1.3 Robert Jordan’s Reflection on Language

Robert Jordan stops and thinks about how the Spanish language influences his own thoughts in English. He goes on to reflect on the character of languages, considering “French, the language of diplomacy,” and “Spanish, the language of bureaucracy” (Hemingway 228). Another instance that demonstrates the main character’s reflections on the Spanish language is the following: “We certainly got Sordo into a fine jam with that horse business. How does it go in Spanish? Un callejón sin salida. A passageway with no exit” (Hemingway 316). Jordan uses the English idiom, “into a jam” in his thoughts and looking for a Spanish equivalent, comes up with “Un callejón sin salida,” which he again translates directly into
English using the phrase “A passageway with no exit” (316). Language is a central theme in this excerpt, since the protagonist stops to consider how expressions differ in various languages, each time translating and re-translating. This technique alienates the reader, who identifies with Jordan as a fellow outsider, unable to grasp the foreign language entirely. Jordan represents a “view from without” (Fenimore 206). In other words, the Spanish language in the novel is presented through the perception of “the non-Spanish looking in upon the Spanish world;” that is, an American, English-speaking outsider (206). The implied reader has a thorough understanding of the English language and therefore identifies with the protagonist’s perception, which gives the Spanish language a certain character (206).

Fenimore highlights one specific passage in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* that demonstrates the author’s interest in “the suggestive value of words” (205):

> there is only now […]. Now, ahora, maintenant, heute, Now, it has a funny sound to be a whole world and your life. Esta noche, tonight, ce soir, heute abend. Life and wife, Vie and Mari. No, it didn’t work out. The French turned it into husband. There was now and frau; but that did not prove anything either. Take dead, mort, muerto, todt. Todt was the deadliest of them all. War, guerre, Guerra, and Krieg. Krieg was the most like war, or was it? Or was it only that he knew German the least well? Sweetheart, chérie, prenda, and schatz. (Hemingway 174)

Jordan speculates that certain words carry distinct connotations and evoke various feelings depending on the language in which they are uttered. Moreover, the scene implies a play-on-words, which can also be found in other conversations such as the following, in which Jordan is eating onions, which Agustín finds odd:

> “What hast thou against the onion?”
> “The odor. Nothing more. Otherwise it is like the rose.”
> Robert Jordan grinned at him with his mouth full.
> “Like the rose,” he said. “Mighty like the rose. A rose is a rose is an onion.”
> “Thy onions are affecting thy brain,” Agustín said. “Take care.”
> “An onion is an onion is an onion,” Robert Jordan said cheerily and, he thought, a stone is a stein is a rock is a boulder is a pebble. (Hemingway 299)

Jordan’s pun leads to his further reflection on objects that are denominated by distinct words in one and the same language as well as in different languages. In addition, the phrasing of his
thoughts refers to a famous line by Gertrude Stein: “Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose” (Stein qtd. in Fleissner 325). Stein includes variations on this line in her poems such as “Suppose, to suppose, suppose a rose is a rose is a rose is a rose” (Stein 186). In some cases, the word “rose” implies a play-on-words, whereas in others, the “phonological” quality of the word is more important. “Stein uses a flattened, reduced, simplified vocabulary,” which enriches the meaning of the narrative and “defamiliarizes and reinvents the familiar” or the common through the writing’s form. Consequently, every word or phrase becomes increasingly important, since “it passes through successive contexts” and its “everyday meanings are gradually replaced by a larger complex or cluster of undefined meanings” (Dekoven 184). Stein was a revolutionary figure; she “[reinvented] literary language and form, undoing conventional, hierarchical, sense-making modes of signification” (185). Because Stein was Hemingway’s mentor (Tomkins 745), he was influenced by her writing, in particular by her use of “repetition and parallel construction” (Taylor 763). He also includes her name in Jordan’s thoughts: “a stone is a stein” (229).

4.2 Spanish in the Novel

Hemingway evokes the Spanish language through various methods in For Whom the Bell Tolls. According to Azevedo, Hemingway’s direct incorporation “of Spanish phrases and idioms, as well as of sentences formed with English words and approximative Spanish syntax” causes an “illusion of orality” (Azevedo 31-32), which goes hand in hand with the predominance of dialogue in the novel. The emphasis on dialogue and orality may be due to the fact that most of the Spanish characters are from the lower, working class, who may not be literate. The dialogue is also of the utmost importance, since it demonstrates the manner of communication that subsists between the main character and the guerrilleros (31).

4.2.1 Spanish Words

Hemingway inserts Spanish words directly into the narrative and the dialogue of the novel without providing an English double, which may complicate the reading. This allows the reader to determine the meaning of what is being said (Azevedo 32). As the Spanish words Hemingway includes are part of a basic vocabulary, they sound familiar to many readers. Fernando, for instance is described as “muy hombre” in the phrase: “But to fight and
to do as he is told. *Es muy hombre!*” (Hemingway 303). Although no direct translation of the word *hombre* is provided, it is rather recognizable and therefore the reader will probably grasp its meaning without extra information. The meaning of the collocation “*muy hombre*” may be harder to pinpoint. However, taking into account the military context, the reader will be able to determine that a feature of manliness is implied in this phrase, which is all that he or she actually needs to understand it.

If the reader keeps the context in mind, the meaning of the Spanish words can be established even if he or she is not familiar with Spanish. In the phrase “*Anda!* Robert Jordan said. ‘And hurry back.’” (Hemingway 285), the reader can assume that the word *anda* means “to go,” since the accompanying phrase implies that there should be a swift return. Some of these Spanish sentences present more of a challenge for the reader, such as this conversation between Jordan and Pilar:

“How do you feel, woman?”

She looked at him and shook her head and smiled. He wondered how far into her face the smile went. It looked deep enough.

“Good,” she said. “*Dentro de la gravedad.*” (403)

The narrative tone helps the reader establish the meaning of Pilar’s response to Jordan’s question; no one could feel “[g]ood” in such a perilous situation, therefore the second part of her answer suggests she is feeling good despite their predicament. In addition, this expression has already been used in a previous conversation by El Sordo and was then translated to: “[w]ithin the limits of the danger” (Hemingway 152). Consequently, the actual translation is given indirectly and if the reader does not remember this, he or she can still rely on the context in which the expression is uttered.

In short, the understanding of these scenes does not depend on the reader knowing each individual word, but rather on him or her acquiring a general view on what is happening. These Spanish words provide the reader with an impression of the culture and language; yet, in the meantime, Hemingway leaves some elements to the imagination of the reader to create a sense of alienation.
4.2.1.1 The Inherent Quality of Spanish Words

The insertion of Spanish words into the English writing suggests that these words possess “a quality not inherent in the English equivalent” (Fenimore 208). The speaker associates a certain object with a specific quality, “which can be conveyed to the English reader through the use of a term objective and more or less unfamiliar to him” (208). Fenimore gives the example of the word “máquina,” used by the gypsy Rafael to describe his experience with a machine gun. When the Spanish word, máquina, is employed the object seems to adopt features of a living being, which it does not posses when translated in English (208-09) as exemplified in the phrase: “the máquina commenced to speak ta-tat-tat-ta!” (Hemingway 32). The personification of the máquina is opposed to the inanimate word “machine gun” as elucidated in Jordan’s association with it:

“Unless they jam, run out of ammunition or get so hot they melt,” Robert Jordan said in English.
“What do you say?” Anselmo asked him.
“Nothing,” Robert Jordan aid. “I was only looking into the future in English.” (Hemingway 29)

In the English version, the machine gun carries a negative, gloomy connotation, whereas the Spanish máquina has no relation to this unfavorable interpretation.

4.2.1.2 Qué Va

The colloquial, Spanish interjection “Qué va!” expresses a sense of negativity towards the other or what is being said, but can also take the form of indifference, negation, disagreement or incredulity. The interjection appears all throughout the novel and means as much as “no way” in English. The reader can interpret its meaning depending on the context. For instance, when Joaquin asks Maria if she feels tired, she answers “Qué va, Joaquin, […] We have sat and talked more than we have walked” (137). Here, the interjection is used to relieve Joaquin’s worries and lighten the mood. The scene in which Pilar is asked whether she often visits Segovia and replies “Qué va. With this face? This is a face that is known. How would you like to be ugly, beautiful one?” (102) calls for a different interpretation. In this case, the interjection adds to the biting and ironic tone, which is reinforced by the question
that follows it, namely “[h]ow would you like to be ugly” (102). The following scene has yet another connotation:

“What happened to the others?” Robert Jordan asked. “Were there no other fascists in the village?”

“Qué va, were there no other fascists? There were more than twenty. But none was shot.”

“What was done?”

“Pablo had them beaten to death with flails and thrown from the top of the cliff into the river.” (Hemingway 108)

Pilar tells Robert Jordan about the four fascists who were shot by Pablo, which leads him to ask her if they were the only ones there. Pilar’s incorporation of the interjection points out the naiveté of Jordan’s assumption. Moreover, it prepares the reader for the harsh response that follows.

The frequent use of “Qué va” implies that it functions as a theme. It captures the novel’s “fundamental spiritual attitude” (Fenimore 210): in order to ensure the achievement of their shared goal – in this case, the winning of the war – the characters put aside their own values and principles (210). The interjection is used, for instance, in the conversation: “‘To kill gives much thirst,’ the man with the wineskin said to me. ‘Qué va,’ I said. ‘Hast thou killed?’” (Hemingway 121). Principles and values are set aside, since they can only be successful through the elimination of the other. In addition, the string of words indicates the speaker’s pessimism and loss of faith in the guerrilleros’ chances of victory and survival. This interpretation is exemplified in the following scene:

“I think there are many that we know that are alive now who will never see another Sunday.”

“In what day are we?”

“Sunday.”

“Qué va,” said Robert Jordan. “Another Sunday is very far. If we see Wednesday we are all right. But I do not like to hear thee talk like this.” (Hemingway 94)

Pilar is realistic in the expectations of success related to their mission. Jordan answers in a way that at the same time confirms Pilar’s worries and tells her that she should not show or act on them, since “[w]orry, sadness, fear, bitterness, and anger” should only be felt “apart from the duty of war” (Lester 122). A similar use of the interjection can be found further along:
“Very beautiful, the snow,” he said to the girl.
“But it is bad for the work, isn’t it?” she asked him. “ Aren’t you worried?”
“Qué va,” he said. “ Worrying is no good. When will supper be ready?” (Hemingway 187)

The interjections in these last two scenes are meant to stress that “[t]o worry was as bad as to be afraid. It simply made things more difficult” (Hemingway 11). Yet, they also contribute to the sense of futility created throughout the novel, because the characters’ situation is, in fact, hopeless. In short, the colloquial interjection qué va has various connotations along the line of disbelief and negation depending on the context in which it is used. Moreover, the frequency of its use reinforces the futility of the characters’ predicament.

4.2.1.3 Spanish Swear Words

Bad language is omnipresent in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, be it in a Spanish or a euphemized English form. Because of the strain of the war, the characters “express their pent-up frustration through language as coarse as their reality” (Azevedo 38). At the time when Hemingway wrote the novel, such swear words could lead to severe consequences for the author. Accordingly, he had to resort to various techniques to avoid his work from being censored (38).

Hemingway includes many Spanish swear words in the novel without translating them into English. Since “obscenity is culture-specific,” cursing in an unknown language becomes “less offensive,” whether its meaning is understood or not (Azevedo 38). Illustrations of the insertion of vulgar Spanish language are:

“You Cabron of the bad milk.” (Hemingway 116)
“The only bad thing is to die at the hands of this canalla.” (116)
“You hijo de la gran puta!” he said softly. (Hemingway 184)
“Joder!” (Hemingway 461)
“Get out and fist yourself into the snow. Take your bad milk out of here, you horse exhausted maricon.” (Hemingway 224)
“The hell with Pablo. Let him cover himself with mierda.” (Hemingway 465)
Even when the reader does not grasp the exact meaning of these words and phrases, it will not take him or her a long time to realize they are curses. Their meaning can be deduced based on the context or can be filled in by using one’s imagination. In sentences such as “[d]o not talk such manure,” he said, using a stronger, ugly word” (358) this fact becomes explicit, because the word “manure” functions as a replacement of something that is offensive.

An oath has different undertones depending on the language, in which it is used and the country, in which it is uttered. Azevedo offers the example of the word “bloody” (38) which is not insulting in the United States, whereas it is in Britain. In addition, some words are considered offensive by one person, while they do not bother others. For example, Pablo thinks Jordan’s people wear kilts and asks him what men wear underneath these “skirts” (214). Most characters present do not interpret Jordan’s response, “Los cojones,” as rude; however, Fernando reacts in indignation, since he believes the word should not be uttered in women’s presence (214). Hemingway was free in his use of curses when resorting to the Spanish variants, since readers were less likely to take offense. Moreover, in Hemingway’s opinion, the Spanish language is characterized by a more liberated use of oaths in everyday conversations, because “[t]here is no language as filthy as Spanish” (328). Accordingly, these swear words characterize the Spanish language and the Spanish people, who are fervent users of these colorful expressions, with the exception of some that follow Fernando’s example.

Some instances of English cursing can be found in the novel, such as the following excerpt:

“Thanks,” Robert Jordan said. “I'll be sleeping outside.”
“In the snow?”
“Yes” (damn your bloody, red pig-eyes and your swine-bristly swines-end of a face). “In the snow.” (In the utterly damned, ruinous, unexpected, slutting, defeat-conniving, bastard-cessery of the snow.) (Hemingway 186)

To allow the character to vent his frustrations, English swear words are included; yet, these are few in comparison to the Spanish alternatives. Furthermore, they only occur in Jordan’s thoughts, which suggests that they are too offensive to utter out loud.
4.2.2 Incorrect Spanish

The Spanish phrase uttered in the sentence: “‘No te apures,’ he whispered to Agustín. ‘Do not worry. They will pass as the others!’” (Hemingway 292) presents another issue. This example has the same structure as so many others in Hemingway’s work, so the reader would assume that the string of words “Do not worry” matches the Spanish phrase “No te apures.” However, the Spanish original can be translated as “do not hurry” instead of “do not worry.” Taking into account the setting of the scene, Hemingway could have made this translation mistake on purpose. Robert Jordan is exposed to high levels of stress at the time of speaking, as the enemy’s cavalry passes right next to him and Agustín while they are hiding in the woods. These circumstances may have caused the non-native speaker to make an error.

The following scene, in which Jordan and Agustín meet, also proves that Hemingway’s representation of the Spaniards’ speech is by no means perfect:

“I am called Agustín and I am dying with boredom in this spot.”
“We will take the message,” Robert Jordan said and he thought how the word aburmento which means boredom in Spanish was a word no peasant would use in any other language. Yet it is one of the most common words in the mouth of a Spaniard of any class.” (Hemingway 48)

Here, the word “aburmento” is used as the Spanish translation of “boredom.” However, the correct Spanish word would have been “aburrimiento.” Jordan is not exposed to the same levels of stress, which may have caused his error in the previous example. However, it is possible that Hemingway made this mistake on purpose in order to emphasize the fact that Jordan remains a foreigner and therefore an outsider. In addition, it is not the author’s intention to present the Spanish language perfectly, but to provide the reader with an idea of the language as mentioned above. Still, these scenes indicate that the transference of Spanish to English should be studied carefully, since the translation is not always correct.
4.3 English in the Novel

When Robert Jordan talks in English, it is clearly indicated and the Spaniards fail to understand what he says as demonstrated in the following scene:

Then in English Robert Jordan said, “Going to grain those horses or peg them out and let them dig for it?” […]

“Why do you speak in English?” Pablo asked.
“T don't know,” Robert Jordan said. “When I get very tired sometimes I speak English. Or when I get very disgusted. Or baffled say. When I get highly baffled I just talk English to hear the sound of it. It's a reassuring noise. You ought to try it sometime.”

“What do you say, Inglés?” Pilar said. “It sounds very interesting but I do not understand.”


“Well then, talk Spanish,” Pilar said. “It's shorter and simpler in Spanish.” (Hemingway 187-88)

Jordan uses English during moments when he loses hope in a positive outcome of their mission. For instance, when he comments on machine guns, Anselmo’s answer indicates that the guerrilleros have no knowledge of English; “Unless they jam, run out of ammunition or get so hot they melt,’ Jordan said in English. ‘What do you say?’ Anselmo asked him” (Hemingway 29). The following sentence uttered by Jordan, “I was only looking into the future in English” (29), clarifies that he counts on the Spaniards not understanding him, because he foresees that machine guns will not guarantee their victory. Maria does not understand Jordan either: “’You taught me a lot, guapa,’ he said in English.” To which she could only reply: “What did you say?” (Hemingway 397). In this case, Jordan’s despair comes to the fore in his thoughts preceding the utterance; namely, “I wish that I were going to live a long time instead of going to die today” (Hemingway 396).

Jordan’s command of the English language gives him a certain authority; he sees the harsh reality and the hopelessness of the situation. The spoken Spanish brings with it the hope of success, which can be seen as a characteristic value of the Spanish culture. Pilar says so herself that things are “simpler in Spanish” (Hemingway 188). In other words, it is easier to hope blindly than face the truth. Consequently, when Jordan speaks in English, he becomes the authority figure on the outcome of their mission.
4.4 Spanish and English Equivalents

4.4.1 Spanish and English Phrases

Hemingway combines Spanish and English phrases besides directly incorporating Spanish words into the text without English equivalents. This “simultaneous interpretation device” equips the reader with a Spanish phrase and an English alternative that clarifies the original expression (Azevedo 32). For instance, the meaning of “Hay que aprovechar el tiempo” is immediately illustrated by the following sentence: “You have to take advantage of what time there is” (Hemingway 211). The same holds for the phrase “What a fine town but how the buena gente, the good people of that town, have suffered in this war” (Hemingway 140). This system allows the author’s inclusion of the Spanish language in his work, while in the meantime giving the reader the means to understand what is being said.

However, the English version accompanying the Spanish words often fails to accurately present its original meaning (Fenimore 209). For example, in the sentence, “‘Listo,’ Pablo said […]. “I am ready for what the day brings” (Hemingway 408), the translation fails to render the same tone as the Spanish phrase “Listo.” Although the English version seems to be an accurate equivalent, it is far more elaborate, poetic and heroic than the original version; it does not evoke the feeling of cruel ruthlessness that is expressed with the abrupt and simple “Listo” (408). This is also exemplified in the phrase, “Que salga el toro. Let the bull out!” (Hemingway 115) used when describing the death of the Fascists. Fenimore points out that, “[w]hile the English here provides guidance to a literal meaning, the Spanish provides the emotional connotation” (209). In other words, because the concept of bullfighting, typical of the Spanish culture, is foreign to English customs, the English language falls short in exposing “the cruelty and blood” suggested by the Spanish metaphor (209). Fenimore provides the reader with another example:

“Qué va, God and the Virgen,” I said to him. “Is that any way to talk?”
“I am afraid to die, Pilar,” he said. “Tengo miedo de morir. Dost thou understand?”
(Hemingway 95)

The use of the Spanish Virgen instead of the English Virgin here causes the reader to stop and consider this, as the Virgin is not associated with fear and death. Moreover, the verb tener or
“to have” intensifies the experience of fear (Fenimore 209-10). As Fenimore points out, “it is not simply that Pablo ‘has’ fear of death: he holds it, desperately, in his two hands” (210). “I am afraid to die” as a translation of the phrase “Tengo miedo de morir” is as such a weaker representation and fails to convey the intensity of the fear suggested by the Spanish version.

4.4.2 English and Spanish Phrases

When the English meaning precedes the Spanish version, “an echo effect” is created, through which the reader can concentrate on the Spanish turn of phrase in particular (Azevedo 32). Azevedo offers the following example to demonstrate the kind of resonance that is created in the reader when this order is used: “That old one kills more than the bubonic plague. Mata más que la peste bubónica” (Hemingway 436). Because of the preparation for what is to come through an English phrase, the reader can more readily “focus on the Spanish expression” and take in the sounds already knowing what is being said (Azevedo 32). Other examples can be found all throughout the novel in sentences, such as “The stew; as usual. Como siempre” (Hemingway 88) and “‘Lots of snow? Eh?’ he said to Pablo. ‘Mucha nieve’” (Hemingway 188).

4.5 The Simulation of Spanish through English

One of Hemingway’s main techniques to recreate the Spanish language is by using English expressions that differ from ordinary speech or writing. This linguistic strategy is based on a “manipulating [of] English morphology, syntax, and vocabulary to create a unique Spanish-in-English diction that mimes spoken Spanish and gives the novel its flavor” (Azevedo 32). This means that Spanish is transferred to an English translation, which still emulates the original Spanish language. The author achieves the simulation of Spanish to English through various methods.

In John Allen’s opinion, however, Hemingway uses this technique only to a certain extent (“English” 6). An immediate rewording of the Spaniards’ speech in English such as the repetition of the phrase “the woman of Pablo” (Hemingway 56) or “the wife of Pablo” (57) based on the Spanish phrase, “la mujer de Pablo” cannot always be included in the writing and therefore mistakes arise. In the case of “the woman of Pablo,” the author preserves the Spanish turn of phrase because the conventional English variant might have seemed
insufficiently representative of Spanish speech (Allen, “English” 6). Allen believes Hemingway is rather consistent when using this method with the exception of some errors (“English” 6). For instance, in “not too bloody much […] if thee wishes,” the word “bloody” does not originate in the Spanish language (6). The following phrase, “this odor of love labor lost […] faintly reaching thy nostrils” can be interpreted as a witty remark made by Pilar; however, this phrase loses its meaning in Spanish (6). Yet, the author’s goal is no perfect presentation of Spanish, but the impression that this language is being spoken. Keeping this in mind, these slips do not take away from the overall effect created by most of the language in this novel, namely that the characters are speaking in Spanish. Spanish is still represented through English and therefore it seems appropriate to include structures or phrases influenced by the English language. Moreover, Robert Jordan, a native speaker of English, provides the reader with his perception of the spoken language; consequently, the inclusion of English expressions is inevitable.

4.5.1 Spanish Syntax

The grammatical constructions Hemingway uses in the English transference of Spanish speech in the novel often call to mind syntactical structures of the Spanish language. Allen believes this representational method of the Spaniards’ language is most noticeable in phrases such as:

“That we should win the war” (Let’s win the war), “this of the battle” (this business of the battle), “what passes with thee?” (what’s the matter with you?), and “he has forty-eight years” (he is forty-eight years old). (“English” 6)

The construction of a phrase like “That we should win the war” (Hemingway 295) reflects the Spanish subjunctive imperative structure, in this case Qué ganemos la guerra to English.

Some “morphosyntactically anomalous calques of Spanish phrases,” call to mind a type of English spoken by Spanish people who do not have a thorough knowledge of the language (Azevedo 35). One of the examples Azevedo provides is: “to have forty-eight years” (Hemingway 147), in which the verb “to have” reflects the Spanish “tener cuarenta y ocho años” (Azevedo 35). Other examples can be found in the following phrases: “I like very much your way of speaking” (Hemingway 37) as a simulation of the word order in the Spanish
equivalent *Me gusta mucho tu manera de hablar*, “I go to see how they have picketed the horses” (65) based on the verbal construction *voy a ver*, “What passes with thee” (95) similar to *Qué pasa contigo?* and “Yes, man. With much interest” (60), which calls to mind a Spanish phrase such as *Sí, hombre. Con mucho gusto*. Accordingly, a feeling of “foreignness” emerges, supported by the odd syntax of certain English phrases, caused by “morphosyntactic differences” that exist between Spanish and English (Azevedo 36).

4.5.2 Literal Translations or False Friends

Hemingway incorporates “cognates,” which are English words of which the form is almost identical to the Spanish word, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (Allen, “English” 6). These words are prominent in Spanish, but bring with them a literal translation to English that “echo[es] the odd yet recognizable” (Fenimore 206). The most frequent examples of this technique in the novel are the words “rare,” “much,” “clearly” and the verb “to molest.”

4.5.2.1 Rare

The English word “rare” serves as a substitute for the Spanish word *raro*, which is frequently used in everyday conversation (Fenimore 206). “*Raro*” denotes something “strange,” as opposed to its English equivalent, “rare,” which indicates something that does not occur very often (Allen, “English” 6). Because Hemingway interchanges these two, an added value emerges which evokes in the reader a sense of strange familiarity. Fenimore believes this “slang value” to be exemplified in the following scene:

> “Very rare, yes,” Pablo said. “Very rare and very drunk. […]”
> He’s rare all right, Robert Jordan thought, and smart and very complicated. (Hemingway 220-21)

Robert Jordan has just told Pablo that he is “a *bicho raro*” (Hemingway 220), which literally means “a weird animal,” implying that Pablo is a strange man. However, Jordan’s acceptance in his thoughts of Pablo’s use of “rare” results in the added “peculiar quality” of the English transference (Fenimore 206).
The word “rare” is connected with Kashkin, the dynamiter who preceded Jordan and blew up a train with the guerilla fighters; it is used whenever the Spaniards talk about him. Because they seem unable to remember his name, they refer to him as “[t]he other with the rare name” (Hemingway 22) or “this foreigner with the rare name” (23). Furthermore, his manner of speaking is considered to be “very rare and windy” (Hemingway 155). Finally, the adjective is used in relation to Kashkin’s death, which echoes his fears of being wounded and his frequent requests to kill him if such a situation arose:

“Qué cosa más rara,” the gypsy said. “All the time he was with us he talked of such a possibility. I don’t know how many times I have promised him to perform such an act. What a rare thing,” he said again and shook his head.

He was a very rare man,” Primitivo said. “Very singular.” (Hemingway 259)

Jordan’s agreement with the Spaniards that “‘[h]e was a little strange […] I think he was a little crazy” (Hemingway 23) not only confirms the Spaniards’ opinion on Kashkin, but also points out that the use of the word “rare” has an additional meaning in Kashkin’s case: namely, that of being “a little crazy” (23). The characteristic of being “rare” is transferred to Jordan as well. He differs from Kashkin, nevertheless, Agustín tells Jordan “Thou art very rare, Inglés” (Hemingway 299). The transference of the Spanish raro to the English “rare” adds a particular meaning to the adjective, which reinforces a feeling of foreignness in Jordan and Kashkin’s case, whereas it evokes a sense of unreliability in the character of Pablo.

4.5.2.2 Much

The word “much” functions as a replacement of the Spanish mucho (Fenimore 206). In the following example, both versions – English and Spanish – occur side by side: “The planes were muchos. Much. Much” (337). “It is much work” (Hemingway 83) is an example, in which the influence of mucho is reflected in English while the Spanish version is absent. Fenimore believes that Hemingway’s translation of mucho into “much” is more complex than the use of “rare,” since it is at times “deliberately unidiomatic” (207). In his opinion, Hemingway employs this strategy in order to stress the “rough and primitive” quality of the Spanish language (207). In the sentence, “That […] is much horse” (15), for instance, the use of the word “much” is grammatically incorrect, although the reader is perfectly able to understand what is meant by it. Further along in the novel, the reader is given the Spanish
equivalent of the previous example: “‘Eras mucho caballo,’ he said, meaning, ‘Thou wert plenty of horse’” (Hemingway 323). This use of “much” can simply be a variation in structure that calls to mind the Spanish language. However, it may also put this horse on a different level in comparison with others, which allows the reader to fill in the qualities that turn this particular horse into a horse that trumps other horses or is more horse than others. Fenimore believes this use of much to be problematic, because in Spanish mucho serves to indicate a quality, while the English “much” demonstrates a quantity. The transference is made in order to express the Spanish intensity of the phrase in English although the result is often ungrammatical (Fenimore 207). Hemingway’s direct translation is no longer idiomatic in English, but enhances the foreign nature of what is being said.

Because the words mucho and “much” are so similar and in some pidgins the word “much” denominates “very” or “many,” Hemingway’s translation of mucho into “much” functions as an echo. The pidgin-English interpretation of “much” implies an association of Spanish with “something of the primitive” (Fenimore 208). This last implication adds a new meaning to the original saying; the translation can therefore be interpreted as “phonetico-semantic” (208). Nevertheless, Fenimore stresses that it is sometimes hard to determine whether it is simply a direct translation or whether the translation carries with it a deeper meaning. Moreover, the translation can be grammatically correct, but the position of the word might seem unnatural. Finally, Fenimore argues that Hemingway simply uses literal translations humorously (208), which, in his opinion, is exemplified in the sentence: “But one must move with much precautions” (Hemingway 50). Not all critics are in favor of an interpretation that connects the Spanish in the novel with a form of pidgin English. The language spoken in the novel “is morphosyntactically too complex to qualify as a pidgin as the term is used in linguistics” (Azevedo 33). Although the use of “much” reminds the readers of qualities of a pidgin, it does not necessarily mean that the language throughout the entire novel is a form of pidgin English. The literary dialect interpretation mentioned above does away with the notion that the English in the novel is a pidgin. The represented language is spoken Spanish and not an unorthodox version of English.
4.5.2.3 Clearly

The word “clearly” serves as a substitution for the Spanish word *claro*, although the context often implies that the speaker has the meaning of “of course” in mind instead of “clearly” (Allen, “English” 6). In the following scene, the word “clearly” and its actual meaning “of course” appear side by side:

> “Tubercular?” Pilar said. “Who wouldn’t be tubercular from the punishment he received? […]”
> “Clearly,” Primitivo said. “I only said he was tubercular.”
> “Of course he was tubercular,” Pilar said. (Hemingway 192)

Other examples of this use of “clearly” can be found throughout the novel. For instance:

> “She was in a very bad state,” the woman of Pablo said.
> “Now she is better, she ought to get out of here.”
> “Clearly, she can be sent through the lines with Anselmo.” (Hemingway 34).

The reader can understand the meaning of the word “clearly” in this sentence; however, a phrase such as “of course” would have been more acceptable in standard English. In a conversation about religion, the loss of faith and the necessity to kill, Anselmo uses the word as well:

> “You have not God any more?”
> “No. Man. Certainly not. If there were God, never would he have permitted what I have seen with my eyes. Let *them* have God.”
> “They claim Him.”
> “Clearly I miss him, having been brought up in religion. But now a man must be responsible to himself.”
> “Then it is thyself who will forgive thee for killing.”
> “I believe so,” Anselmo said. “Since you put it clearly in that way I believe that must be it. But with or without God, I think it is a sin to kill. To take the life of another is to me very grave. I will do it whenever necessary but I am not of the race of Pablo.”
> “To win a war we must kill our enemies. That has always been true.”
> “Clearly. In war we must kill. But I have very rare ideas,” Anselmo said. (Hemingway 44).
In this conversation, two meanings of the word “clearly” come to the fore. When “clearly” is used in the phrase “[c]learly I miss him” (44), it also functions as a synonym of “of course.” In “[s]ince you put it clearly in that way I believe that must be it” (44), however, it functions as an adjective that indicates that Robert Jordan’s point of view is valid and understandable.

In addition to these instances, the word “clearly” also comes up multiple times in scenes or sentences that contain imagery related to the sun or the day. For instance, Jordan and Pilar talk about her loss of faith; still, she continues to believe in a positive outcome:

The woman said. “I confess a sadness to you, but do not think I lack resolution. Nothing has happened to my resolution.”
“The sadness will dissipate as the sun rises. It is like a mist.’
“Clearly,” the woman said. (Hemingway 94)

In other examples, there seems to be a connection between the day, daylight, the ability to see – literally and figuratively – and the word clearly. For instance:

“There is the day also,” the woman said. “You have the night, but there is the day, too. Clearly, there is no such luxury as in Valencia in my time.” (Hemingway 97)

***
“But to leave afterward and get out of this country in daylight presents a grave problem.”
“Clearly,” said Robert Jordan. “I have thought of it. It is daylight for me also.” (Hemingway 157)

In these cases, the derivative word “clearly” seems to take on the characteristic of “clear,” which is related to light and sunshine and therefore has a positive connotation. Consequently, the use of the word “clearly” instead of “of course” functions as a reinforcement of light imagery. In the last example, daylight holds a negative connotation as opposed to its normal implications of positivity and happiness. Here, it is connected to the ability “to see” as in “seeing clearly” or “being seen,” which would endanger the characters’ situation and will probably cost their lives in the end.
4.5.2.4 To Molest

The verb “to molest” in English has a different connotation than its Spanish double “molestar.” Pilar says: “I will tell it truly as it was. But thee, guapa, if it reaches a point that it molests thee, tell me” (Hemingway 104). In these words of caution before telling her tale, the word “molests” serves to present the meaning of the Spanish verb molestar, which leans more closely to the English verbs “to upset,” or “to bother,” whereas the English suggests an assault (Allen, “English” 6). It is clear that Hemingway’s use of this word constitutes a more profound meaning, because the character Maria has been assaulted and raped by the fascists before Jordan joins the guerrilleros. Accordingly, the English verb suggests more than the Spanish version in this case. Another example in which the verb “to molest” appears is the scene in which Jordan explains that he did not kill Pablo, because he “thought it might molest you others or the woman” (Hemingway 64). In short, the English “to molest” is used in contexts, in which the meaning of the Spanish molestar holds and the English verb should therefore be “to bother.” Nevertheless, in certain circumstances the English verb adds another connotation that Spanish fails to bring forth.

4.5.3 The Translation of Swear Words Into English

Hemingway transfers the complex profanities containing more than one word into English through various strategies. These utterances are insulting in Spanish, but are no longer considered to be so after being translated to English. According to Azevedo, Hemingway’s slighting of family through sentences such as “[t]hy mother” (Hemingway 98), for instance, loses its offensive quality because it is translated (Azevedo 39). In addition, Hemingway substitutes swear words for synonyms that do not suggest a blasphemous term; for example, “[t]he fornicator ducked back” (Hemingway 321). The suggestion of an oath can also be constructed using “a near-sounding placebo” (Azevedo 39) such as the verb “to muck” in the following scene:

You’re just mucked, he told himself. You’re mucked for good and higher than a kite. […] You can muck your way out of it. You’ve got to, you know you’ve got to blow it if you have to stand there and – cut out that stuff, too. Why don’t you ask your grandfather? Oh, muck my
grandfather and muck this whole treacherous muckfaced mucking country and every mucking Spaniard in it on either side and to hell forever. (Hemingway 385-86)

The way the word “to muck” is used in itself and in the verbal constructions here, alludes to the English “fuck,” which would have been too strong to include in his writing.

Hemingway also inserts euphemisms such as “obscenity,” “unprintable” and “un-nameable” into the characters’ dialogue. These words arise from his work as a reporter (Dewberry 31). They result in the readers’ realization that these phrases are offensive without them being confronted with the actual insult (Azevedo 41). Examples of this strategy can be found in the following scene:

“That we blow up an obscene bridge and then have to obscenely well obscenity ourselves off out of these mountains?” […]
“Go to the unprintable,” Agustín said. “And unprint thyself. But do you want me to tell you something of service to you?”
“Yes,” said Robert Jordan. “If it is not unprintable,” naming the principle obscenity that had larded the conversation. The man, Agustín, spoke so obscenely, coupling an obscenity to every noun as an adjective, using the same obscenity as a verb, that Robert Jordan wondered if he could speak a straight sentence. (Hemingway 48-49)

This method allows the reader to fill in the meaning of the oath based on the context (Azevedo 39). Azevedo suggest that the following “mock argument between Pilar and Agustín” is an instance of this technique (41):

“Where the hell are you going?” Agustín asked the grave little man as he came up.
“To my duty,” Fernando said with dignity.
“Thy duty,” said Agustín mockingly. “I besmirch the milk of thy duty.” Then turning to the woman, “Where the unnameable is this vileness that I am to guard?”
“In the cave,” Pilar said, “In two sacks. And I am tired of thy obscenity.”
“I obscenity in the milk of thy tiredness,” Agustín said.
“Then go and befoul thyself,” Pilar said to him without heat.
“Thy mother,” Agustín replied.
“Thou never had one,” Pilar told him. (Hemingway 98)
The word “milk” that often accompanies these translations of Spanish curses can be traced back to “the Spanish leche in the vulgar sense of ‘semen’” (Azevedo 40). Evidently, this Spanish insult completely loses its impact when translated to the English and innocent word “milk,” which adds to the comic quality of the scene.

In short, the transference of Spanish swear words to English undoes their offensive nature as does their replacement by words such as “obscenity” or “unprintable,” which serve to avoid censorship and to enhance the humorous effect of the novel. Nevertheless, they also allow the reader to imagine what they original may have been in, besides alienating the reader who becomes aware of language per se and characterizing the Spanish people.

4.5.4 Thee, Thou and Thy

The language in Hemingway’s novel is characterized by the use of the personal pronouns “thee” and “thou” as English alternatives for the Spanish tú. For instance, the phrase, “'And thou! Thou!’ Agustín turned from the door and spoke to him, putting all his contempt in the single, ‘Tu’” (Hemingway 223) demonstrates the equivalency of the English “thou” and the Spanish tú. In the past, “you” and “thou” functioned similarly to the Spanish forms of tú and usted, since the former indicated an informal discourse, whereas the latter was used in formal contexts. Hemingway combines rather old-fashioned personal pronouns such as “thou” and “thee” with the more colloquial and modern “you” (Azevedo 33). Therefore, the conversations often jump from an informal to a very formal style. “Thou,” “thee,” and “thy” remind the modern reader of an ancient and outdated kind of speech associated with a Biblical writing style (33). This reinforces the idea of a Shakespearean kind of language spoken by the guerrilleros, which, in turn, emphasizes their noble character. Fenimore exemplifies the shift in register used by the author in the following dialogue (212):

“Where the hell are you going?” Agustín asked the grave little man as he came up.
“'To my duty,’” Fernando said with dignity.
“'Thy duty,’” said Agustín mockingly. “'I besmirch the milk of thy duty.'” (Hemingway 98)

In English, the use of “thou” and “thee” are “artificial and always consciously employed” (Fenimore 212), because they no longer form a part of everyday language. In this case, Agustín’s response, “thy duty,” serves in a way “to mock the dignity” (212) with which
Fernando is speaking. There are also passages, in which “thou” suggests a high level of emotions. When characters switch from “thou” to “you,” the resulting dialogue contains “less personal intensity” (212). Although one may expect “you” to suggest more intimacy and even intensity, this does not seem to be the case in Hemingway’s use of the personal pronoun. An example of the alternation between “thou” and “you” can be found in a dialogue between Jordan and Pilar:

“Be very good and careful about the girl. The Maria. She has had a bad time. Understandest thou?”
“Yes. Why do you say this?”
“I saw how she was from seeing thee when she came into the cave.” [...]
“You and the Anselmo can take her when this terminates.” (Hemingway 34)

Pilar’s transition from “thou” to “you” can be explained through a consideration of the content of the conversation. She uses the formal “thou” and “thee” when making a point about the girl Maria, which carries the main importance in this dialogue. Once she has clarified her opinion, she switches to “you,” a personal pronoun that does not stress the intensity of the content in the dialogue. The same switching between formal and informal personal pronouns holds for the following conversation between Jordan and the gypsy Rafael:

“Take things a little seriously,” Robert Jordan said. “This is serious.”
“Thou askest me to take things seriously? After what thou didst last night? When thou needest to kill a man and instead did what you did? You were supposed to kill one, not make one!” (84)

Although this scene also carries emotional intensity, since Rafael feels indignant, the theory that the use of the personal pronoun “thou” accompanies emotional intensity does not hold completely. The character already switches back and forth between “thou” and “you” in the middle of his emotional account. Accordingly, the switching between formal and informal personal pronouns can highlight that emotional intensity, which results in the character’s linguistic instability or inconsistency. Moreover, the main goal of this technique may not be demonstrating emotional intensity, but drawing the reader’s attention to the language itself through the shift in formal and informal language.
The opposition between formal and informal language need not be created through the incorporation of the personal pronoun “you,” but can also be achieved through the content of the conversation as exemplified in the following scene:

“Canst thou spit?” Agustín asked him and winked at Robert Jordan. Fernando hawked and spat proudly on to the floor of the cave, then rubbed it in the dirt with his foot. “You filthy mule,” Pilar said to him. “Spit in the fire if thou must vaunt thy courage.” (Hemingway 404)

Here, a striking contrast is created through the lofty use of “thou” when talking about the ability to spit, which seems to be a simplistic and casual topic. The same holds for the following scene: “Thou my big good little pony,” Pablo was saying to the horse in the dark; it was the big bay stallion he was speaking to” (Hemingway 67). It is clear that the personal pronoun “thou” clashes with Pablo’s addressing the horse as his “big good little pony” (67) to such an extent that the scene becomes humorous and the character pathetic.

Whether it is through the combination of an old-fashioned personal pronoun and a modern one or the frivolous content, the most likely interpretation of Hemingway’s intention when combining these formal and informal elements in his writing, is the creation of a feeling of unfamiliarity resulting in either emotional distress or ironic distance or comedy. The defamiliarization further contributes to the reader’s awareness of the novel’s language per se.

4.5.5 The Definite Article “The”

In Spanish, the definite article can accompany a proper name, for instance “El Sordo;” however, in English this combination is ungrammatical. Still, Hemingway uses this element of Spanish syntax in his English translation to simulate Spanish speech. For example, Pilar warns Robert Jordan to be gentle with the girl, because “[t]he Maria. She has had a bad time” (Hemingway 34). The article is not only combined with the girl’s name, but also with Pilar’s when Agustín mentions Pilar’s qualities: “The Pilar is much, much more than thou canst imagine” (303). In addition, the definite article accompanies Anselmo’s name when Pilar says: “You and the Anselmo can take her when this terminates” (34). These phrases seem faulty in English, but they create an impression of the Spanish language. Moreover, they suggest the guerrilleros’ respect for one another and their noble character.
4.6 The Effect of Language in the Novel

4.6.1 Primitivism and Authenticity: The Spaniard as a Noble Savage

Hemingway’s protagonist is both “an intellectual and a man of action,” who joins “the popular forces of peasants [and] workers” (Stoltzfus 182). The Spanish peasants in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* such as El Sordo and Anselmo are from the region of Castile in Spain, others have a bullfighting background, such as Pilar and Pablo (Barea 197). Castilian Spaniards are reserved and talk in a “simple and direct” manner, which reflects their preference for a dignified simplicity and their “pride in their manly strength” (Barea 200). Because Hemingway never lived among these Spaniards, he opts for characters that are guerilla leaders who stem from the bullfighting environment with which he is familiar (200). However, peasants like El Sordo and Anselmo would never follow the lead of people like Pilar or Pablo in reality (201). Spanish critics like Arturo Barea believe that, as a reporter, Hemingway did not live the Spanish Civil War (208); he was merely an observer, which resulted in his unrealistic rendition of the civil war in the novel (210).

Besides the Castilian characters’ simple and straightforward nature, Hemingway employs techniques in the novel that further reinforce this aspect of the Spanish culture and language. Methods such as the transference of the Spanish syntax to an English version, the incorporation of personal pronouns “thou,” “thee,” and “thy,” the “phonetico-semantic” variants (Fenimore 208) such as the words “rare” and “much” contribute to this characterization of the language and people. Most of these strategies evoke a “direct and, in a sense, primitive atmosphere of language” (Fenimore 219). This representational approach calls to mind the notion of the “noble savage” that Allen associates with the depiction of the Native American people (“English” 6). Jean-Jacques Rousseau invented the term “Noble Savage,” which implies “a mythic personification of natural goodness by a romantic glorification of savage life” (Ellingson 1)\(^2\). Therefore, the noble savage need not be Native American, but can also pertain to another primitive culture. Still, the connection with Native Americans is explicitly made in the novel:

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\(^2\) However, “Rousseau was actually a vigilant critic of these tendencies” such as “primitivism and the cult of the noble savage” (Todorov qtd. In Ellington 3-4). As a result, the term “noble savage” is in itself ambiguous. Ellington therefore “conclude[s] that Rousseau’s invention of the Noble Savage myth is itself a myth” (Ellington 4).
"The gypsies believe the bear to be a brother of man."

“So do the Indians in America,” Robert Jordan said. “And when they kill a bear they apologize to him and ask his pardon.” [...] 

“Are the Indians then gypsies?”

“No. But they believe alike about the bear.” (Hemingway 43)

The allusion to the respect of life associated with Indians is connected to gypsies and not necessarily Spaniards as a people, because Anselmo stresses afterwards that he himself is not a gypsy. Still, the comparison between Indians and gypsies raises an awareness in the reader of shared qualities between these peoples and may facilitate the connection with the image of the noble savage.

The word choice in the novel constitutes a relation between the culture of Native Americans and Spaniards. Robert Jordan reflects on the Spanish people and their loyalty and concludes that a Spaniard is in the first place loyal to “Spain of course, then his own tribe, then his province, then his village, his family and finally his trade” (Hemingway 141). Besides the quality of loyalty, Hemingway’s use of the word “tribe” calls to mind the lifestyle of the Native Americans, which can again be associated with the idea of the Spaniard as a noble savage.

4.6.1.1 The Brevity of Construction, Repetition and Simplistic Syntax

War requires its participants to talk about their experience in order to survive (Lester 121). Still, the circumstances do not always allow time for this. As a result, “speech is often hurried, cut short” (121) as Jennifer Lester exemplifies in phrases such as “Much better not to speak of it” (Hemingway 336) and “It does no good to talk” (Hemingway 400) in For Whom the Bell Tolls. However, short constructions and their rhythmic patterns mainly contribute to the representation of the Spanish language in the novel. Fenimore points out two main techniques the author uses to simulate “what we accept as the ‘Spanish’ of the dialogue” (218). The first is the “brevity of construction,” of which he offers the following conversation as an example:

“Are you ready to eat?”

“Is it ready?”

“It is ready when you wish it.”
“Have the others eaten?”
“All except you, Anselmo and Fernando.”
“Let us eat then,’ he told her. (Hemingway 213)

The short rhythmic patterns and colloquial nature of this conversation call to mind the Spanish language, but also construe an image of Spanish people’s character as being straightforward. Many examples of these brief and direct conversations can be found throughout the novel, among which:

“Where is the old man?”
“At the camp.”
“Where was he last night?”
“In Segovia.”
“Did he bring news?”
“Yes,” Joaquin said, “there is news.”
“Good or bad?”
“I believe bad.”
“Did you see the planes?” (Hemingway 138)

The conversation’s blunt nature also demonstrates the seriousness of the situation.

According to Fenimore, this conciseness also reflects the Spaniards’ “unilinear” and “primitive” mindset associated with the unfamiliarity of their world (218). Instead of the Spanish language determining the rhythm of the narrative, he believes “Hemingway’s rhythmic patterns” establish that the represented language is Spanish (218). In his opinion, Anselmo’s inner thoughts and the way in which they are structured demonstrate the “simple and direct spirit” of the Spanish people (Fenimore 219):

I wonder about the Inglés, he thought. He told me that he did not mind it. Yet he seems to be both sensitive and kind. It may be that in the younger people it does not have an importance. It may be that in foreigners, or in those who have not had our religion, there is not the same attitude. But I think any one doing it will be brutalized in time and I think that even though necessary, it is a great sin and that afterwards we must do something very strong to atone for it. (Hemingway 205)
The unadorned sentences used here in addition to the repetition of the words “it may be” reinforce the quality of simplicity that is meant to characterize the Spanish people. Equally important is the content of these thoughts in which Anselmo contemplates on killing another human being. This respect for life ties in with the Native American ideology mentioned above. Moreover, the scene constitutes the characterization of the other – that is Jordan as an outsider – since Anselmo reflects on how Jordan’s “attitude” differs from his. This distinction may be caused by Jordan’s foreignness or by a difference in religion.

The second method the author employs contains both “verbal and constructional repetitions,” which can be found in the previous scene, but also in Jordan’s reflections. Fenimore provides the reader with this example (Fenimore 219): “Of course they turned on you. They turned on you often but they always turned on every one. They turned on themselves, too” (Hemingway 142). This scene emphasizes the Spaniards’ unstable nature, which ties in with the “savage” part of the term “noble savage.” Allen finds support for the idea of the Spaniard as a noble savage as well and believes it is exemplified in Anselmo’s hopes when it comes to the outcome of the war; “That we should win this war and shoot nobody,” Anselmo said. “That we should govern justly” (Hemingway 296). Evidently, the content of the scene reminds the reader of the nobility of the guerrilleros. Although the war requires killing, the character would prefer victory to be achieved without taking lives. For one thing, this quality cannot be described as anything but heroic. In addition, the phrase “that we should” reminds the reader of the Spanish syntax of the subjunctive imperative and the repetitive presence of this verbal construction contributes to the characterization of the Spanish language and people. In this scene, both the theme and the form of the sentence structure indicate the people’s noble and honorable nature. However, only a part of the Spanish people is represented as such, since not all Spaniards supported the Republic; some fought for the dictator general Franco instead. Anselmo’s noble thoughts expressed in the scene above suggest that Hemingway makes a political statement on the Spanish Civil War in favor of the left. Still, the political implication of this scene is negated by the author’s description of the fascists being beaten to death or forced to jump from a cliff. Here, the author critiques the guerrilleros and as a consequence also the side of the Republic during the war. Accordingly, the novel cannot be seen as “a study in black and white” (Baker, Writer as Artist 241).

The third technique entails a simplistic type of syntax as the following conversation between Jordan and El Sordo, which takes place in Spanish, but is reproduced in English exemplifies:
El Sordo said. “Whiskey?”
“You have whiskey?”
El Sordo nodded. “Inglés?” he asked. “Not Ruso?”
“Americano.”
“Few Americans here,” he said.
“Now more.”
“Less bad. North or south?”
“North.”
“Same as Inglés. When blow bridge?” (Hemingway 147-148).

This type of speech makes Jordan ask himself whether El Sordo talks in this way to everyone or whether he does so to make him as a foreigner understand what he is saying (Hemingway 152). This dialogue is an example of the adaptation of the English language in order to reflect the Spanish “clipped syntax” (Azevedo 36) that lies beneath it. El Sordo’s phrases contain only the “bare essentials” of a sentence in order to make communication with Jordan easier (37). Azevedo argues that El Sordo’s speech calls to mind the kind of Spanish used by Spaniards when attempting to converse “with monolingual tourists” (38). Nevertheless, Jordan notes that after a while El Sordo “was not talking the pidgin Spanish now” (Hemingway 157). He switches to a more conventional Spanish when he has established Jordan is capable of communicating in Spanish (Azevedo 38). Contrary to Azevedo’s point of view, El Sordo’s simplistic manner of speaking may not only have to do with his attempt to communicate with the foreigner. The discussion at hand requires El Sordo to be more verbal than he usually is, which is confirmed by Pilar who says, “Never have I heard thee talk so much” (Hemingway 158). Furthermore, later on, it turns out that El Sordo “had returned to speaking his broken Spanish” (160). Consequently, the character’s concise manner of speaking need not be caused by his communication with Jordan, but rather may be influenced by his personality and by his impaired hearing. This is suggested by his nickname “El Sordo,” which means as much as “the deaf one” in Spanish. Accordingly, the representation of language in this case could be considered to be more of a character sketch than a depiction of the Spanish language as a whole.
4.6.1.2 The Idealization of the Spanish People

Hemingway had a strong admiration for the Spanish people and culture; however, he attempted to maintain an objective point of view when writing about them so as to avoid a superficial or idealistic representation. Allen believes Hemingway’s admiration for the Spanish people and his goal to avoid romanticizing them is expressed through Robert Jordan’s reflections (“English” 7):

Remembering to bring the whiskey was one of the reasons you loved these people. Don’t go romanticizing them, he thought. There are as many sorts of Spanish as there are Americans. But still, bringing the whiskey was very handsome. (Hemingway 213)

Although his perspective often idealizes the Spaniards, the character is aware of this as his internal monologue indicates; he reflects on the subjectivity of his own perspective when considering the unfamiliar other. The protagonist is captivated with the guerrilleros’ hospitality and customs, yet not completely at home. He is both an insider and outsider, since he is welcome in the group, but does not fit in entirely even though at times he wants to and even believes he does.

4.6.2 The Epic Genre

Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* can be seen as “a prose epic of the Spanish people” (Baker, *Writer as Artist* 247). In line with the characterization of the Spanish people as simple, yet honorable people, elements of a primitive nature contribute to the novel’s epic quality (248). These features entail:

[a] primitive setting, simple food and wine, the care and use of weapons, the sense of imminent danger, the emphasis on masculine prowess, the presence of varying degrees of courage and cowardice, the rude barbarism on both sides, the operation of certain religious and magical superstitions, [and] the warrior codes.” (248)

Hemingway resorts to other strategies besides the latter to constitute an epic novel.
4.6.2.1 Elizabethan English and the Epic

Hemingway pays close attention to “the tone of language” in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in order to create “the proper blend of ancient and modern idiom” (Baker, *Writer as Artist* 249). The resulting Elizabethan type of English reinforces the novel’s heroic quality. The “characters mean more than themselves alone” and play a part in a critical event nationally and even universally (Fenimore 217). The English is associated with an “epic language,” which helps constitute the novel’s universe and the reader’s perception of the characters (217). When characters inquire whether others have been in a war, they have conversations as the following:

“And hast thou been in many battles?”
“Several.”
“And what thinkest thou of this of the bridge?” (Hemingway 46)

This dialogue calls to mind a kind of speech associated with medieval knights. A sentence such as “I am called Agustín and I am dying with boredom in this spot” (Hemingway 48) also adds to this idea of a noble knight. Furthermore, the conversations between the lovers, Robert Jordan and Maria, conjure up a language used in love affairs in medieval courts or in Shakespearean plays, as exemplified in phrases such as “Already thou seemest beautiful and more” (Hemingway 68) and “‘Kiss me,’ she said, ‘if thou goest.’ ‘Thou art shameless,’ he said” (Hemingway 278). Accordingly, the dialogue used throughout the novel strengthens the epic quality of its content.

Fenimore associates the epic genre with “the element of remoteness in time or space” (217). The time frame of the novel comprises the Spanish Civil War focusing on the rebel side. Because Spain and the United States are situated that far apart, the “remoteness in space” in the novel is implied (Fenimore 217). Moreover, Hemingway uses “a language remote in time which, since the novel binds us to the present, [and] lends its energies to establish a scene remote in space” (218). This interpretation ties in with the fact that Robert Jordan, as an American, is connected to a new world as opposed to the *guerrilleros* who, as Europeans, have a vast historical tradition. To prevent the reader from identifying entirely with the characters, the author resorts to a language that will evoke a sense of the unfamiliar so as to ensure the reader’s reflection on the language and the Spanish people. The “shortness of time” (Hemingway 397) suggests time as it is normally experienced is undone in the novel
“Now” has become the time frame and contributes to the novel’s “intensity” (210), which results in the feeling that there never existed, nor ever will exist another time than that “now” (210). Jordan expresses the significance of the present himself: “there is only now” (Hemingway 174). He then goes on to think about how the word “now” is expressed in other languages. The epic genre is therefore reinforced by the remoteness in space evoked through a language of the past, in addition to the focus on the short amount of time available to the characters, which enhances the novel’s intensity and the magnitude of the events that are occurring.

Still, not every reader will interpret these techniques and, for instance, the use of personal pronouns such as “thou” and “thee” in the same way, since they can evoke a multitude of associations. However, these methods will invariably provoke a climate of the unfamiliar by “lifting dialogue out of the frame of colloquial speech and into that of a speech which is something else” (Fenimore 216). Fenimore believes that the nature of the novel’s dialogue is not determined by the simulated Spanish language underneath the English, but rather that the Spanish language serves to explain the disintegration of “colloquial English” used by the author to “recapture […] the varying tones inherent in a more or less unfamiliar, frequently artificial, but also vigorously poetic English” (Fenimore 216-17). The type of English used is determined by the event’s mood and representation “and by the emotional intensity of the given scene” (217). Hemingway therefore wants to energize English and enhance its poetic nature by incorporating Spanish or some of its characteristics.

In short, be it through the insertion of archaic structures that remind the reader of the Bible or Elizabethan writings or be it through a combination of an informal and formal register, Hemingway’s main goal is the defamiliarization of the reader in order to ensure his or her awareness of language and reflection on the Spanish language and people.

4.6.2.2 The Novel’s Title

The title “For Whom the Bell Tolls” derives from a poem by John Donne, a poet who lived from 1572 till 1631 (“John Donne” 600). Hemingway included this poem as the novel’s epigraph. Donne is one of the “Metaphysical Poets,” whose works were re-evaluated in the twentieth century by the modernist writer T.S. Eliot (602). The metaphysical poets’ writing style ties in with Eliot’s idea of “dissociation of sensibility” that implies the necessity of “a unity of thought and feeling” in intelligent, yet emotional poetry (Childs 105). Hemingway
finds inspiration in Donne as a metaphysical poet and employs a similar Elizabethan writing style to characterize the Spaniards in the novel. In addition, Donne’s poem stresses that “No man is an *Iland*, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent*,” which can be linked with the transnational nature of the novel, since the expatriate protagonist is no longer tied to his nation (Donne qtd. in Hemingway 2). Furthermore, the last line of Donne’s poem, “never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee” (Donne qtd. in Hemingway 2) implies that Jordan is accepted by Pilar’s group of Spaniards because he understands the Spanish people and speaks their language (Stoltzfus 186). Nevertheless, the phrase in Donne’s poem also calls to mind the inescapable fate that awaits Robert Jordan, who will not live to see the end of the war, nor return to his homeland.

4.6.2.3 The Tone Of the Dialogue Versus the Narrative Tone

The novel’s dialogue has a specific tone because Hemingway uses techniques such as the introduction of “thou” and “thee,” the short, direct constructions, and so on. Some critics believe that the narrative and dialogical tone show many differences. Because of the “stylized speech [that] foregrounds the characters’ voices,” their language rings true, yet differs noticeably from “the standard diction of the narrative voice and of Jordan’s internal monologues” (Azevedo 32).

Other critics argue that the mood that the author creates in the dialogues is continuously transferred onto the narrative (Fenimore 215). The tone of the narration in the description of Robert Jordan, for instance, already echoes the heroic quality of the dialogue:

The young man, whose name was Robert Jordan, was extremely hungry and he was worried. He was often hungry but he was not usually worried because he did not give any importance to what happened to himself and he knew from experience how simple it was to move behind the enemy lines in all this country. (Hemingway 6)

According to Fenimore, the following scene exemplifies this transference between the lofty dialogue and the narrative descriptions that come in between:

the gypsy said. “How do they call thee?”

“Roberto. And thee?” […]
Anselmo came out of the mouth of the cave with a deep stone basin full of red wine and with his fingers through the handles of three cups. […]

“Here is the wine.” Anselmo dipped a cup out of the bowl and handed it to Robert Jordan, then dipped for himself and the gypsy. […]

The wine was good, tasting faintly resinous from the wineskin, but excellent, light and clean on his tongue. Robert Jordan drank it slowly, feeling it spread warmly through his tiredness.

“The food comes shortly,” Pablo said. “And this foreigner with the rare name, how did he die?” (Hemingway 22-23)

Fenimore describes the relationship between the dialogue and the narrative as a “perfect harmony,” because it is impossible to determine whether the “narrative shapes [the] dialogue, or dialogue narrative” (216). In his opinion, the imagery of the scene calls for a more formal and “poetic” language in order to maintain the “suggestion of the narrative” (216). The adventurous and epic atmosphere is enhanced by Hemingway’s descriptions of the “basin full of red wine” (Hemingway 22); the wine, “tasting faintly resinous from the wineskin” (23) and by the introduction of the character of the gypsy (Fenimore 216). This is also the case in:

“The wife of Pablo was standing over a charcoal fire on the open hearth in the corner of the cave. The girl knelt by her stirring in an iron pot” (Hemingway 52) as well as “One called Agustín is dying of boredom above” (Hemingway 53). The first example is a descriptive narrative sentence, whereas the second one serves as a means to represent the novel’s setting through dialogue (Fenimore 216). The following scene functions in a similar way:

There was no wind, and, outside now of the warm air of the cave, heavy with smoke of both tobacco and charcoal, with the odor of cooked rice and meat, saffron, pimentos, and oil, the tarry, wine-spilled smell of the big skin hung beside the door, hung by the neck and the four legs extended, wine drawn from a plug fitted in one leg, wine that spilled a little onto the earth of the floor, settling the dust smell. (Hemingway 62)

The way in which language functions to describe the cave resembles Hemingway’s techniques to characterize the Spanish people through their speech. Moreover, it contributes to the setting’s atmosphere and epic quality besides symbolizing the guerrilleros’ character.
4.6.3 National Identity

National identity is brought up in Hemingway’s novel in various ways. The Spanish characters are confused about Robert Jordan’s nationality and continue calling him “Inglés,” although he mentions he is American multiple times: “‘Listen to me, Inglé.’ ‘Not Inglés. American.’” (Hemingway 70). They attribute other nationalities to him as well: “‘Inglés?’ he asked. ‘Not Ruso? ’‘Americano’” (Hemingway 147). Jordan’s part in the novel is first and foremost “the role of foreigner” (Allen, “The Unspanish War” 204). His foreign nature as the Inglés emphasizes that he is set apart, alienated from the others. In addition, the incorporation of the Spanish language in the novel further isolates the protagonist “linguistically” (205). Jordan is an instance of Hemingway’s “lonely hero,” an expatriate who finds himself “alone” in a foreign setting (Allen, “Unspanish War” 205). It was his personal choice to isolate himself in order to support “a cause or idea or abstraction” with a view of “[giving] some meaning to his own sense of himself” (206). His arrival with the mission to blow the bridge is detrimental to the guerilla fighters as exemplified in Pablo’s reaction: “you cannot blow bridges close to where you live. You must live in one place and operate in another” (Hemingway 13). This illustrates Carlos Baker’s argument that the Spaniards “hate foreigners for interfering in their civil war” (Writer as Artist 252). Jordan’s coming brings the actual civil war to guerrilleros who will lose their hiding place because of the operation (Allen, “Unspanish War” 207). Furthermore, his arrival leads to the group’s disintegration as indicated by Pablo’s separation from the others (208). These aspects reinforce Jordan’s alienation from the Spanish characters.

The Spaniards see Jordan as an outsider; “the Inglés does not count since he is a foreigner and under orders” (Hemingway 385). Accordingly, Jordan does not belong with the Spanish guerrilleros, although Anselmo comes to his defense by pointing out that “He speaks Spanish as we do,” when Pablo says that he believes it to be “presumptuous for a foreigner to teach Spanish” (Hemingway 218). Opinions on Jordan’s national identity demonstrate that he is not considered to be on an equal by the Spaniards, because he does not share their national identity. Yet, Jordan himself does not believe the others see him as an outsider, since he “never felt like a foreigner in Spanish and they did not really treat him like a foreigner most of the time; only when they turned on you” (Hemingway 141-42). Still, there is a cultural difference between himself and the Spanish people. Even Anselmo who defends Jordan, reflects on this distinctiveness as “[i]t may be that in foreigners, or in those who have not had
our religion, there is not the same attitude” (Hemingway 205). Consequently, although his presence is accepted by most of the characters, Jordan does not belong.

Because the novel follows the Spanish guerrilleros closely, the focus on their national identity in contrast with Jordan’s is inevitable. The Spaniards are first and foremost loyal to their country, which is demonstrated in Jordan’s thoughts on the subject (Hemingway 141). The uniqueness of the Spanish people is brought forth in the following dialogue between Pilar and Jordan:

“Spain,” the woman of Pablo said bitterly. Then turned to Robert Jordan. “Do they have people such as this in other countries?”

“There are no other countries like Spain,” Robert Jordan said politely. (Hemingway 88)

The Spaniards are presented as a proud people, since Pilar says “What people the Spaniards are […] And what a people they are for pride, eh, Inglés?” (Hemingway 135). These qualities connected with the Spanish people have positive connotations, but can become negative when taken too far. In addition, these examples demonstrate that the Spaniards have lost a part of their faith in the grand Spanish nation and its people. This negativity is confirmed when Agustín admits to Jordan that he has trouble to control himself and not kill the fascists right away. Jordan’s reflections stress how killing is done differently in various cultures:

“We do it coldly but they do not, nor ever have. It is their extra sacrament. […] They are the people of the Auto de Fe; the act of faith. Killing is something one must do, but ours are different from theirs. (Hemingway 297)

However, Jordan has to conclude that he has had the same reaction in the heat of battle.

The Spanish national identity plays a major role in the novel. Taking into account that everything is mediated through an outsider, the representation of the Spanish identity is subjective. Jordan himself is aware of this and attempts to avoid “romanticizing them,” since “[t]here are as many sorts of Spanish as there are Americans” (Hemingway 213). Leo Gurko supports the notion that Hemingway critiques Spanish people in general and represents them “as treacherous” (260): “They turned on you often but they always turned on every one. They turned on themselves, too” (Hemingway 142). This last sentence refers to the situation of the Spanish Civil War at hand. Spain is divided within itself; its inhabitants have turned on each other although they pertain to the same nationality. In addition, Hemingway portrays them as
“callous” (Gurko 260), since “[t]here is no finer and no worse people in the world. No kinder people and no crueler” (Hemingway 368). The Spanish national identity seems to contain many contradictory elements and differs strongly from Jordan’s identity. Although Jordan does not always feel like a stranger, the fact that he is not Spanish himself should be taken into account when considering the representation of the Spanish national identity in the novel.

4.6.4 Language as a Means for Defamiliarization

Viktor Shklovsky believes that “[a]utomatization” (qtd. in Crawford 21) occurs when we look at an object and are familiar with it to such an extent that we cannot “say anything significant about it” (Shklovsky qtd. in Bogdanov 49). Art, however, allows for a return to life and feeling by “[making] things ‘unfamiliar’” (Shklovsky qtd. in Crawford 210). Automatization can only be undone by art, which establishes an unfamiliar perception of an object.

Hemingway creates a sense of “the unfamiliar” in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* through various techniques (Fenimore 211). The author’s fiction and characters are composed in such a way that they “reflect a fundamental sense of alienation” (Stoltzfus 192). Many of the author’s methods to evoke the Spanish language such as the use of “thou” and “thee,” the incorporation of Spanish words, and the various types of swear words or obscenities function as defamiliarizing elements (211). Because the implied reader shares Robert Jordan’s language, a sense of familiarity is created with his manner of speaking and thinking, which is therefore experienced by the reader as accurate and direct. The Spanish language, however, is foreign and its depiction in English in words such as “obscenity” or “unprintable” has no fixed meaning. Fenimore describes them as “a blank check which we fill out according to the nature of our imagination and (though this is wholly incidental) our knowledge of Spanish” (211). The reader is not supposed to replace Hemingway’s vague translation from Spanish into English by a word that perfectly determines the meaning of what is being said, because this would undo the author’s intention of creating a sense of the unfamiliar through suggestion, which is a feature of Hemingway’s iceberg theory. Although the plot of the novel is rather straightforward, the author’s linguistic approach can be associated with a method of “overtone and suggestion” (Fenimore 212). The use of language and “phonetico-semantic translation” contribute to the “epic quality” of the novel’s setting during the Spanish Civil War (212).
In short, Hemingway constructs “a literary dialect that harmonizes a three-way contrast among standard English, phrases in Spanish, and the characters’ Spanish-in-English” in the novel (Azevedo 43). Consequently, a sense of defamiliarization is created. Because of the stark difference between traditional English, which the reader shares with the protagonist and “the Spanish-in-English dialogue” (43), the reader is dissociated from the characters. Moreover, the reader’s personal interpretation is indispensable in the novel. The effect of defamiliarization puts the reader in the same position as the protagonist who finds himself in a foreign setting, in which he cannot be completely integrated although he wants to be. Consequently, the Spanish environment and language become confusing for Jordan as well as the reader.

4.6.5 The Sense of Doom

Carlos Baker believes *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to be “a study in doom” (*Writer as Artist* 251). In classic “tragic epic[s]” such as Homer’s *Iliad* (250), the supernatural serves to predict the tragedy. Hemingway cannot be as explicit as these traditional epic tragedies. However, the author approximates the “supernatural” through the “use of premonition” (Baker, *Writer as Artist* 253). This contributes to “the reader’s foreboding” and “sense of impending tragedy” (253). Various “premonitions” in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* demonstrate the inescapability of the mission’s failure from the start (“Unspanish War” 209). When Robert Jordan forgets Anselmo’s name, he thinks to himself that “[i]t was a bad sign” (Hemingway 5). In addition, Pilar reads the imminent failure and death in Jordan’s hand:

[She] looked at it, carefully, then dropped it. She stood up. He got up too and she looked at him without smiling.

“What did you see in it?” Robert Jordan asked her. “I don’t believe in it. You won’t scare me.”


Her refusal to answer him only confirms that she must have seen something negative. Moreover, the prevalence of rhythmic characteristics and brevity in language or dialogue seem to be “patterns of the inescapable fatality” that is imminent throughout the novel (Fenimore 220). Furthermore, Pablo seems treacherous from the very beginning, since he has “the sadness they get before they betray” (Hemingway 15). The enemy’s airplanes flying
overhead “mov[ing] like mechanized doom” (Hemingway 92) contribute to this feeling of an inescapable, fatal outcome as well (Baker, *Writer as Artist* 252). The author connects these “modern bombers with the ancient magic-symbol of number three,” which heightens the reader’s interpretation of their presence as a negative foreboding (253). According to Michael Allen, two other elements contribute to the impression of imminent disaster: the story about the doomed bullfighter Finito and the continuous “[blaspheming]” of the holy Virgin (“Unspanish War” 208), which will only bring them “bad luck” (Hemingway 329).

The unavoidable failure is eventually formulated by Golz in French: “Nous sommes foutus. Oui. Comme toujours. Oui. C’est dommage” (Hemingway 446). Like Jordan, he resorts to a language that is not Spanish to express this feeling. While Jordan speaks of his doubts of success in English, Golz uses French as a vehicle for these sentiments. The *guerrilleros* do not stand a chance, which is kept from them through the use of languages they cannot understand. The undertaking’s futility is also expressed in the utterance of the Spaniards’ “[turning] on you” and “on themselves” (Hemingway 142), which could fit all of humanity, as Hemingway has managed “to articulate in fiction the destructive forces of the century” (Gurko 261).

The short and direct sentences contribute to this sense of doom, in addition to the repetitive pattern, which serves as “the expression of the men before the inescapable force,” which “alone can be mastered and held to and made a kind of anchor against this destroying power” (Fenimore 220). The theme of the single human being’s annihilation when confronting the world comes to the fore in other writings by Hemingway, for instance in *A Farewell to Arms*. As Fenimore notes: “[a]ny path to the crisis will do, for in a world which kills and breaks, any path may, sooner or later, bring the individual to the point from which no escape is possible” (220). The author is interested in the inevitability of the situation at hand, not in the way it came to be (220).

4.6.6 Humor and Irony

Hemingway’s use of language in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* proves that he “is not without a sense of humor” (Fenimore 208) when transferring Spanish to English in instances such as Anselmo’s saying “One must move with much precautions” (Hemingway 5). The novel deals with a serious topic, and from the beginning a sense of foreboding is created. In order to lighten the mood, the author integrates humor, using various techniques. The
transference of swear words from Spanish to English especially adds to the comic character of the novel. Azevedo notes that Pilar and Agustín’s dialogue can be interpreted as a “mock argument” (41):

“Where the un-nameable is this vileness that I am to guard?”

“In the cave,” Pilar said. “In two sacks. And I am tired of thy obscenity.”

“I obscenity in the milk of thy tiredness,” Agustín said.

“Then go and befoul thyself,” Pilar said to him without heat.

“Thy mother,” Agustín replied.

“Thou never had one,” Pilar told him, the insults having reached the ultimate formalism in Spanish in which the acts are never stated but only implied. (Hemingway 98)

The endless enumeration of swear words and the manner in which the characters react to each other’s bad language indicate that they are not serious in their complaints about the other. This argument serves as a way to cope with the grave situation at hand. The same holds for the conversation between Robert Jordan and Pilar when they are about to blow up the bridge: “‘Thy mother,’ Robert Jordan said. ‘Thou never hadst one,’ Pilar whispered cheerfully” (Hemingway 422). Evidently, these playful curses they throw at each other alleviate the stress and fear felt when leaving for their mission. In addition, the contrast between English and Spanish enhances the novel’s comic effect, because the utterances are as dramatic as they are in sayings such as “‘Ay, mi madre!’ the gypsy said. ‘I am a poor, unlucky man’” (Hemingway 285) or “The hell with Pablo, let him cover himself with mierda” (465). The combination of formal personal pronouns “thou” and “thee” with an informal context also adds to the comic nature of the novel. For instance, the scene in which Pablo addresses a stallion as “Thou my big good little pony” (Hemingway 67) indicates that the man is losing control. Still, the combination of “thou” combined with a phrase as “my big good little pony” is amusing as well.

For Whom the Bell Tolls also contains ironic elements. For example, Fernando is the only person who is offended by Jordan’s talking about cojones (Hemingway 214). Yet, Fernando himself is “shot through the groin” in the end (Hemingway 457). The scenes in which other characters do not want “to molest” Maria function in a similar fashion, since the English verb “to molest” implies an assault. The characters tiptoe around the girl to avoid reminding her of how she was raped and assaulted by the enemy, while they indirectly mention that fact through their word choice.
5 Conclusion

Language is central to Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, since the novel presents a multilingual situation. The English-speaking protagonist Robert Jordan works with a group of Spanish guerilla fighters, who only speak Spanish. The spoken language in the novel is therefore Spanish, which is at times explicitly mentioned. In addition, Spanish words are included in the dialogue and narration. The importance of language is illustrated through the main character’s awareness of and reflection on language throughout the novel.

To represent spoken Spanish, Hemingway uses a variety of methods. First, he inserts Spanish words directly into the novel. The reader can determine the meaning of these words by turning to the context in which they are used. The direct incorporation of Spanish is used in cases in which Spanish words add an extra meaning that the English version fails to provide. Accordingly, an inherent semantic quality is associated with Spanish words that are included directly. Although the Spanish in the novel is not entirely correct, it succeeds in giving the reader an impression of the Spanish language and people, since it was the author’s intention to share with the reader “everything I had learned about Spain for eighteen years” (Hemingway qtd. in Josephs 238). In addition, the incorporation of the Spanish language adds to the characterization of the Spaniards and the *couleur locale* in the novel. Spanish (rather than English) swear words are also included. On the one hand, they help the author avoid censorship. On the other, they add to the vividness and humor of certain scenes besides contributing to the atmosphere of the novel. Jordan also talks in English in the novel. Yet, when this occurs, it is always explicitly mentioned in the novel, since the *guerrilleros* cannot understand him. As a result, Jordan only resorts to English to express his doubts on a positive outcome of their mission and counts on the Spaniards’ inability to understand.

Second, Hemingway juxtaposes English and Spanish alternatives, so that the reader has a translation at hand. Nevertheless, the English translation often entails a slightly different implication, since it can never truly approximate the original Spanish. The order in which these equivalents appear influences the reader’s perception; the Spanish phrase that follows the English one functions as an echo, which allows the reader to focus more readily on the Spanish version, because he or she already knows what it means.

Third, the Spanish speech is simulated through English. Hemingway achieves this by using a particular kind of English that is characterized by syntactic structures that call to mind the Spanish language in addition to literal translations of common Spanish words that carry a
different meaning in English, such as “rare” and “much.” Spanish swear words are also translated to English and through this translation lose their offensive quality. The author employs ancient English personal pronouns such as “thou” and “thee” in order to further alienate the reader and raise his or her awareness to language per se. In Spanish, it is possible that a proper name is preceded by a definite article, which is ungrammatical in English. Still, Hemingway employs this syntactic structure in English as well in order to call to mind the Spanish language.

In other words, Hemingway uses language to evoke the atmosphere connected to the Spanish environment, in which the American English-speaking expatriate finds himself. Communicational issues arise when the protagonist speaks in English, since the Spaniards fail to understand him. The multilingual setting of the novel allows Hemingway to experiment with the representation of languages, which is a prominent feature in modernist literature. In addition, the insertion of Spanish words ties in with the modernist developments related to the “linguistic turn,” which suggests that language contributes to the construction of people’s world view. Consequently, the Spanish language is fundamental in shaping the world and mindset of the people who speak it. Spanish is therefore indispensable to Hemingway’s depiction of the Spaniards in For Whom the Bell Tolls, since the language adds to the characterization of the Spanish guerilla fighters, their culture and their identity in the novel.

These linguistic methods that serve to characterize the Spanish language have implications for the representation of the novel’s characters as well as its story. The short and concise phrases and their repetition that predominate in the novel not only serve to conjure up the Spanish language but also contribute to the Spaniards’ characterization as simple, yet honorable people. The concept of the noble savage can be associated with these qualities that arise in connection with the characters. Hemingway may have aimed to represent the guerrilleros as primitive but noble people, because many belonged to lower classes. Nevertheless, this depiction may also be a political statement on the author’s part in favor of the guerilla fighters. Still, Hemingway attempts to demonstrate that both sides of the conflict are ruthless and violent as illustrated through the scene of the killing of the fascists. The characteristics of the noble savage can be applied to the guerrilleros in For Whom the Bell Tolls; however, given the situation of the civil war, they cannot represent the Spanish people as a whole. The notion of the noble savage may also contribute to the epic quality of the novel.
Moreover, the language used in the novel adds to its epic tone. The Elizabethan type of English calls to mind a language used in medieval courts, which at the same time represents the people as noble and the story as epic. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*’ title is associated with this Elizabethan language as well, since it recalls a poem by the metaphysical poet John Donne. The heroic quality of the novel’s story is reflected in the characters’ dialogues and their actions that entail sacrificing themselves for their country as well as in the tone of the narration and the descriptive language of epic settings. The language used to depict the cave in which the guerilla fighters plan their mission, for instance, has a rich and warm quality that serves as an equivalent of the lofty, formal language used in the novel’s dialogues. These elements add to the heroic and epic genre of the novel.

Furthermore, the languages that are present in the novel are linked with national identities. There is a lot of confusion about Jordan’s nationality, which is elucidated by the *guerrilleros’* nickname for him: *Inglés*. Jordan speaks English but is American, which is not acknowledged by the Spaniards in the novel. Although he wants to be included in the band of guerilla fighters, Jordan remains an outsider and a foreigner. The Spanish national identity is also dealt with in the novel, since the novel is set against the background of the Spanish Civil War. However, this civil war suggests that there is no set Spanish identity. Hemingway provides the reader with a representation of the Spanish people’s character, but the issue of segregation within a supposedly harmonious group repeatedly emerges in the novel. This internal division indicates that the Spanish language fails to unite the Spanish people. As a result, Spanish is on par with English, since English does not unite one nation either; it is widespread across the globe as it is spoken by Englishmen, Americans, Canadians, Australians and so on. However, the Spanish characters do not accept this similarity by continuously referring to Jordan as the *Inglés* instead of *Americano*. However, the Spaniards may associate the word “*americano*” with Latin America. Consequently, they may be unable to connect this aspect of identity with Jordan. The link with Latin America confirms the notion that Spanish cannot unite one people as well, since an entire continent comprising numerous nations shares the language. Reflection on national identity became increasingly present in modernist literature.

In addition, the language used in the novel, with its many peculiarities and Spanish insertions, adds to the reader’s feeling of alienation or defamiliarization. He or she does not feel at home and is made aware of the importance of language in understanding or belonging to a certain nationality or group of people. This defamiliarization can be seen as a way to position the reader in a situation similar to that of the protagonist. Jordan remains an outsider
because he is foreign: his Spanish is not perfect and the local people regard him as the *Inglés*. The reader finds him- or herself in the same boat, since the insertion of the Spanish language and the type of English that is spoken in the novel does not allow him or her to completely grasp the situation. Accordingly, the reader remains on the outside, just like Jordan.

Furthermore, a sense of doom emerges throughout the novel related to the modernist period, which is marked by a general disillusion caused by the violence and destruction of war. The negative feeling of inescapability is created through the concise and direct language, which is also associated with the character of the Spanish people. The feeling that the war is a lost cause is expressed in the novel, but only in languages other than Spanish. Jordan expresses his feelings of doubt and the imminent disaster only in English, while Golz uses French to utter his fears. Consequently, Spanish is associated with a simplicity and naïveté, since its speakers still entertain feelings of hope that a positive outcome can be achieved.

Finally, the language has a humorous and at times ironic effect, which aims to alleviate the tension that is created by the novel’s setting during the Spanish Civil War and the feeling that the story will have a tragic ending of some sort that persists from the very beginning. Especially, euphemized obscenities and oaths in addition to the use of a formal language to describe very informal and at times ridiculous events contribute to the humorous quality of the novel. The ironic elements emerge through language used around a character that is related to his or her past or future. Hemingway therefore fits the image of the modernist writer as an expert in irony.

In conclusion, Hemingway’s approach to language is of the utmost importance in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, not only since it reflects the multilingual environment in which the novel is set, but also because it functions in a way to characterize the Spanish people. In addition, it defamiliarizes the reader in such a way that he or she identifies even more with the protagonist besides adding to the novel’s humorous quality.

These strategies employed by the author can be seen in a bigger framework, since the modernist movement shows a particular interest in languages and author’s experiments with them.
6 Works Cited


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