Article

Figurative Devices in Selected American Military Creeds: A Stylistic Study

Ayad Hameed Mahmoud
College of Education for Humanities, University of Diyala, Iraq

Alyaa Husein Abd Fatah
College of Education for Humanities, University of Diyala, Iraq

Abstract
Military discourse has a considerable impact on the lives of people all over the world, yet only few scholars have paid considerable attention to this sort of discourse. This leads to an obvious need to investigate this genre from different perspectives including stylistics which is the main concern of this study. The study is intended to stylistically analyze a sample of three American military creeds. The study hypothesizes that American military creeds have their own figurative devices which make them distinct texts, and that the figurative devices employed in military creeds vary in terms of their frequencies and functions. The study also hypothesizes that, being written discourse, military creeds are figuratively based, and that the employed figurative devices have a complementary role. They all contribute together to fulfill the creeds' aims and convey their intended messages. The selected samples are analyzed in the light of Leech and Short's (2007) model which accounts for figurative devices. The results of analysis show that military creeds have their own distinctive stylistic features, and they are figuratively based. The results also show that the stylistic figurative devices characterizing military creeds have a complementary role in that they all contribute together to achieve the creeds' aims and convey their intended messages.

Corresponding author:
Alyaa Husein Abd Fatah, College of Education for Humanities, University of Diyala, Iraq
Email: saddamyaqub1976@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Each branch of the US military owns its distinctive creed which is a set of beliefs and concepts that guide the militants' lives and activities. A creed reminds militants of their responsibilities and the commitments they have given to their country and comrades. A creed also brings members of a team together by highlighting a similar goal and a conjoint set of values. Recruits remember their branch's creed and how it formed their military minds during basic training (Defense, 2011). In spite of the increasing importance of Military Creeds (henceforth MCs) and their impact on the hearts of soldiers and their motivation for achieving the desired goals, they still represent a real gap in various fields of studies among which is the stylistic field with which this study is concerned. Thus, there is an obvious need to find out the stylistic features that characterize these kinds of texts.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Style: Etymology and Definitions

Etymologically, "style" is originally traced to the Latin word "stilus" which means a brisk tool for carving letters (Bussmann, Kazzazi, & Trauth, 1996; Gray, 1984). Turning etymologically from stylus which means an instrument used for writing, style can simply refer to perceived distinctive manner of EXPRESSION in writing or speaking, just as there is perceived manner of doing things (Wales, 2014).

Generally, style has been defined by different scholars and according to different considerations. One of the earliest definitions is proposed by Oxford (1933) that views style as a manner of writing, speaking, or doing; or diction or artistic expression-proper to a person or school or period of subject and noticeably superior quality or manner. Another early definition is proposed by Hockett (1955) who illustrates the concept of style as:

> "two utterances in the same language, which convey approximately the same information but which are different in their linguistic structure, can be said to differ in style".

Osgood (1960) views style as;

> "an individual's deviation form norms for the situations in which he is encoding, there deviations being in the statistical properties of those structural features for which there exists some degree of choice in his code".

Quirk (1969) as cited in Hejal (2006) considers man's style as personal and particular as man's fingerprint which is unique, that one mostly can distinguish between one writer's work and another easily.

Style is explanatory. It emphasizes the elements added to the message transmitted through linguistic structure without changing meaning. Thus, it can be said that language has the power of expression and style provides confirmation (Ellis, 1977; Whiteley & Canning, 2017; Widdowson, 1975).

For Leech and Short (1981), style refers to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose. Tannen (2005) sheds light on

style regarding it as anything that is said or done must be said or done in some way, and that way constitutes style.

Style Features

Features of style are defined by Leech and Short (1981) as the occurrence in a text of linguistic or stylistic category. Future, for example, is one of linguistic categories, while alliteration is an example of stylistic categories. Stylistic categories are intricate, but they can be described by using linguistic categories, and these in turn can be described as (contrastive) which means that the existence of one category necessitates the absence of another category (Ibid).

Writers usually use various devices to generate a particular style. One of these features is the use of ellipsis (omitting a few words) in writing the headlines. This feature is a result of the headlines' typographical make up as they are written in larger type face than the rest of the article. The omitted words can be predicated by the context (Nashruddin, Alam, Alam, & Niskarlina, 2022; Verdonk, 2002). Another feature is that intertextuality as utterances or text relation to other utterances/ text (Abdulxamitovna, 2022; Wales, 2014).

Style and Choice

Many different styles can be found because every author follows his own style in writing e.g. colloquial or formal. Carter and Stockwell (2008) describe style as a choice of certain structures over others available in the language. Style is also motivated choice from the set of language or register conventions or other social, political, cultural and contextual parameters (Burke & Coats, 2022; Nørgaard, Busse, & Montoro, 2010). Style can also be thought of as interpersonal trait involving choices that are motivated by psychological and social factors (Ibid).

If style is considered a choice, so there will be a variety of stylistic factors that influence a language user's performance for particular linguistic forms over others. These factors can be classified into two groups: (1) considerations related to the situation in which the language is used as well as factors that are related to the language user e.g. age, gender, personal performance, and social background, and (2) factors relating to the situation whether they are spoken or written, dialogue or monologue, formal or not (Stranzy, 2005).

Style, Competence, and Performance

According to Dolezel (Parhankangas & Renko, 2017; Rosengren, 1972), style forming process can be considered as a part of the ingredient of linguistic (performance). Dolezel focuses on the process by which the choice of a style is made, the one most appropriate mode of expression from a set of alternatives (Ibid). Because selection is bounded by a number of subjective and objective factors, the alternative is provided by speaker's linguistic competence (Ibid).

The Saussurean dichotomy has a counterpart which is the distinction that Chomsky makes between performance and competence: a distinction between what the speaker of a language knows implicitly (what we may call his competence) and what he does (his performance). A grammar, in the traditional view, is an account of competence

(Enkvist, 2016; Johnstone, 2017). This statement can be applied to theories of style. Actually, the concept of performance has been invoked frequently to explain grammatical abnormalities that are common in everyday speech.

Then one may ask where should style move? Towards competence or toward performance? If one knows clearly that a text which he reads or hears is written in a particular style and if he is also able to write texts in this style, so this suggests that the characteristics of the style should be considered as part of his competence (Burnett, 2019; Enkvist, 2016).

Style Markers

Since stylistics is known by its selectivity, then it is reasonable that some stylistic analysis focus on only one feature and others on a cluster of features. The process of selection is based on two criteria: linguistic and literary criterion. So, style makers are salient features of a particular style resulting from combining both linguistic discrimination and literary discrimination (Leech & Short, 1981).

A narrator uses particular linguistic expressions in many points to keep readers comprehending the text. Readers identify these expressions as (representations) of times, persons, and places and they transform them into clues that help them to be involved in the situation of the discourse, some of these are:

Deixis is a textual clue used to point to or rather direct, the listener's or reader's attention to the speaker's or narrator's spatial and temporal situation (Verdonk, 2002). Another employed clue is given information. The speaker supposes that the addressee has already known this information because he or she is assumed to be existed in the context (situational or linguistic) of a particular discourse, so the previous clue acts as a provider of other elements within the discourse transmitting new information. The narrator may also use attitudinal words like (elegant) to construct his identity through what he says. So it is clear that he makes his observation and realizations subjectively (Ibid).

Figurative Language and Military Discourse

For Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphor is

> "one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally: our feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, and spiritual awareness. These endeavors of imagination are not devoid of rationality; since they use metaphor, they employ imaginative rationality".

Wars, complicated societal issues and natural disasters all have ineffable intricacies that only metaphors can approximate. Military thinking leaders, who are most effective, direct others to realize and express the intractable or unfathomable through the smart and often covert use of metaphors (Paparone, 2008).

Newtonian science, post-Newtonian science (like physiology), and the humanities are the three principal sources of metaphor that work in the current Western military community. Military-minded leaders may also direct troops into believing that they are a part of a powerful instrument that will aid in the elimination of evil actors and terrorists by assaulting their center of gravity (Ibid, pp.56 -57).

A metaphor is an efficient comprehension tool in military discourse. Its efficiency can be due to:

1. It is a perfectly clear schematic knowledge for a typical war. It entails a battle between opposing forces with a clear line between good and evil.
2. There is a prevalent knowledge of a prototype war. Wars are an integral aspect of humanity's history. They have identified what is known as world's sociopolitical landscape that we still fighting them.
3. Many prevalent topics of argument have a strong resemblance to battle. They have parallel structural relationships and elicit similar feelings (Flusberg, Matlock, & Thibodeau, 2018).

Metaphor has been used extensively by military authors, and the success of this employment has resulted in several "dead" military metaphors. These are the ones that have become so popular to the extent they are no longer considered metaphors, but rather a component of standard military parlance. An example of successful and hence dead metaphor is the word "power" of fighting (Brendler, 1997; Semino, Demjén, & Demmen, 2018). It is up to the reader to decide how much weight to give a phrase like 'general mess' which may have subconsciously enlarged the clear meaning of 'general' in times of conflict to include the military commander's role and expand the definition of 'mess' to include the usual military term for the area where soldiers eat (Hendricks, Demjén, Semino, & Boroditsky, 2018; Punter, 2007).

On Military Terminology

The skill associated with war and the realization of its necessities need the development of a unique language to consolidate communication among warriors. The battle field description and experience have evolved and the dangerous weapons and the language used to explain their effect have a paradoxical relationship. Death and devastation have been replaced by what has been referred to as the domestication of combat violence. So, the language used in military field is a confirmation of the institutions' control over lethal and destructive weaponry, it is a functional and separate variant of the English language (Ogar, Nwoye, & Bassey, 2019; Okongor, 2015).

Although military documents have shared characteristics in technical documents, they none the less have distinct traits that can be explained by broad aspects of military institutional discourse. Structure clarity and conceptual certainty make the military lexicon materials understandable. At the same time, a variety of unique military lexicon as well as several reductions and abbreviations, make it complex to comprehend military discourse (Mammadzade, 2013; Park, 2020).

Military compositions are not constant. They evolve by removing some words from communication and alteration of meanings, as well as the coining of new words. All these are results of armed forces reorganization and the emergence of new kinds of weapons (MacKenzie, 2020).

The new military terms are generated by the standards governing English terminology. The following are examples of word formation processes:

1. Compounding which refers to the lexemes that have more than one stem like belt-fed.
2. Affixation
   It is the addition of an affix to a word in order to generate a new term with a dissimilar meaning like bravery and surrender.
3. Intersecting words like air strip and bloodshed
4. Shorting like chute from parachute
5. Conversing words
   These words are created thought zero derivation which involves transferring a word that belongs to a particular part of speech to another, even without changing its form (Bhinder, 2021).

New military terms can also be the result of what is called military innovation. In this phenomenon, individuals agree on a general view of the content and value of new military concept. An example is neologisms which are words that are frequently made up or manufactured by the speaker for a specific purpose e.g. e-solution (electronic solution). Another lexical feature of English military discourse is abbreviation, which is a truncated version of a word of phrase like (ZF) for Zome of Fire (Ibid, p.56).

RESEARCH METHOD
The Adopted Model

The present study adopts the model proposed by Leech and Short (2007) which accounts for figurative devices. The elements of this model can be diagrammed as follows:
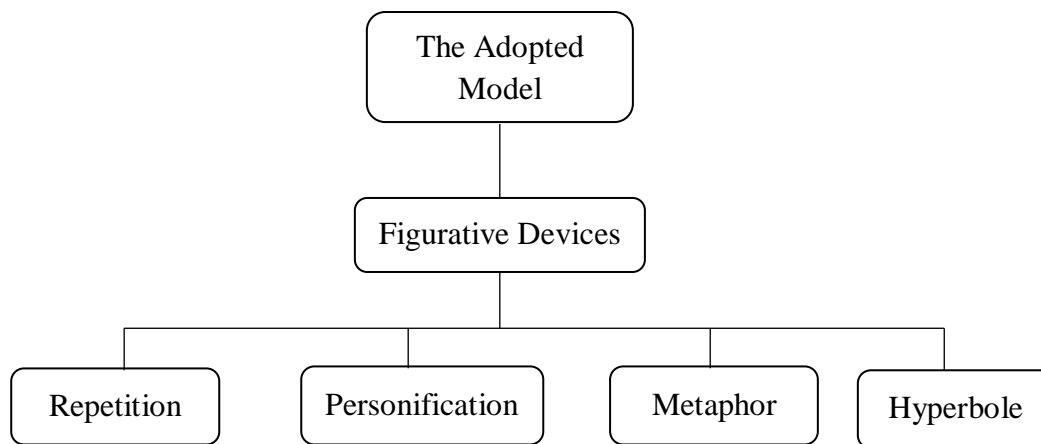

Figure 1. The Adopted Model

Figurative Devices

This model is based on the ideas of Leech and Short (2007) ideas about linguistic figures of speech and how tropes function as language codes in stylistic analysis. Elements of this model can be stated as follows:

1. Repetition

It is a common literary trope used in both poems and prose (Short, 1996). Repetition demonstrates the logical emphasis that is required to draw a reader's attention to a key phrase or key word in a text. It entails repeating sound, words, phrases, sentences, and clauses in a specific order to emphasize a point (Kemertelidze & Manjavidze, 2013). An example is:

(1) Then It's Hi! Hi! Hey! (Defense, 2011).

2. Personification

According to Gray (1984, p.122), personification entails ascribing human attributes or qualities to non-human objects. For Short, personification is an idea that is figuratively transferred as a human while it is not the case in reality (Short, 1996). For example:

(2) "My rifle and myself know" (Defense, 2011)

3. Metaphor

According to Wales (2014), metaphor means mentioning one thing to state another as in:

(3) "My rifle is my best friend" (Defense, 2011).

4. Hyperbole

For McArthur (1992), hyperbole is a "rhetorical term for exaggeration or overstatement, usually deliberate and not meant to be taken (too) literally" as in

(4) "I was scared to death" (Wales, 2014).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
1. Analysis of Creed No.1 "The NCO Creed"
1.1. About the creed

The abbreviation (NCO) used in the title of the creed stands for "Non-Commissioned Officer". This creed has existed for a long time in a variety of formats. Sergeants can still remember reading the creed on the day of their NCO Corps induction. Earle Brigham remembers writing three letters on a piece of plain white paper during one brainstorming session with NCO. They started to construct the creed from those three letters. To provide noncommissioned officers with a "yardstick by which to measure themselves", a creed was developed. The creed was eventually authorized and started to be printed in 1974 on the inside cover of the particular texts given to the students enrolled in the noncommissioned officer courses at Fort Benning. The creed was distributed throughout the Army and submitted higher for approval, but it took 11 years for an official army publication to establish it. Even after numerous revisions, the creed still starts each paragraph with those three letters: NCO. The new generation of noncommissioned officers continues to get guidance from it and have their values reinforced (Ausa.org, 2020).

1.2. Figurative devices

Metaphor is used by the writer in "*the Backbone of the Army*". The backbone is an essential and crucial part of the body and without which a human being cannot move. Similarly, noncommissioned officers' corps are the key for the military power, proficiency, and operations.

The writer uses hyperbole in "*No one is more professional than I*". It is a kind of exaggeration and showoff. Again, the writer uses hyperbole in another sentence when he says" "*I am a member of a time honored Corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army*". Table (1) below summarizes the frequency and percentage of the figurative devices in Creed no.1

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of the figurative devices in Creed no.1

Figurative Level							
Repetition		Personification		Metaphor		Hyperbole	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
0	0	0	0	1	33.33	2	66.67
Total of (F)	3			Total of %	100		

Table 1 shows that hyperbole is used twice representing (66.66%), while metaphor is used only once representing (33.33%). Both of these figurative devices are employed to make the militants proud of their military field, and make the text attractive.

2. Analysis of Creed No.2 "The Airman's Creed"

2.1. About the creed

This creed was written by General T. Michael Moseley in 2007. In his letter, he states that reinvigorating the warrior mentality in each Airman of Total Force was one of his "top priorities". The creed's goals are therefore to strengthen the development of a warrior ethos among its Airmen, and to provide them a concrete declaration of ideas. The Air Force's dedication to helping and defending the country is reflected in The Airman's Creed, which also expresses pride in the role of air, space, and cyberspace power. The Air Force's history serves as fuel for the doctrine, and in Moseley's words, "the war fighting-focused culture, conviction, character, ethic, mindset, spirit and soul we foster in all Airmen". The creed, which replaced every other creed had been using (the NCO Creed, the Chief's Creed, the First Sergeant's Creed, etc.), has not been without debate (Airman, 2020).

2.2. Figurative devices

The writer uses repetition device by writing the same sentence at the beginning of each paragraph to make this sentence emphasized and memorable since it is the central sentence about which the whole creed is written.

The environment in which the airman works and fights is unique, so the writer unleashes his imagination in his use of figurative devices. Personification is used in the

sentence; *"I have answered my Nation's call",* where he considers the abstract concept (Nation) as an animate entity that can make a call.

In the third paragraph, the writer mixes both personification and metaphor in "Guardian of Freedom and Justice". First, he considers the abstract concepts (Freedom) and (Justice) as people who need protection by guardians. Second, the writer describes himself metaphorically as a (guardian) because he is not a guardian in the literal meaning but he shares with him many features. The airman flies to fight and defend his country and beliefs. Similarly, the guardian uses his power and his weapon to protect people.

Again, the writer mixes two devices in the phrase *"My Nation's Sword and Shield"*. By personification, he depicts (Nation) as a person who can carry a sword and wear a shield. Metaphorically, he makes a hidden comparison between himself and "*Sword and Shield*" where all fight, defend, and protect precious entities. The writer assimilates himself to tools used in wars but these tools are not modern which indicates the writer's pride in his nation's history. By these devices, the writer aims at enhancing and inspiring the readers' imaginations as well as making the text attractive and elegant. Table (2) below summarizes the frequency and the percentage of the figurative devices in Creed no.2.

Table 2. Frequencies and percentages of figurative devices in Creed no.2

Figurative Level							
Repetition		Personification		Metaphor		Hyperbole	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	16.67	3	50	2	33.33	0	0
Total of (F)	6			Total of %	100		

Table 2 shows personification has the highest frequency in creed no (2) as it is used (3) times forming (50%). Metaphor is used twice forming (33.33%) to make the text persuasive and interesting. Repetition which is used to emphasize particular concepts occurs once only recording (16.66%).

3. Analysis of Creed No.3 "Army Civilian Corps Creed"

3.1. About the creed

The mission and responsibilities of the Army Civilian are outlined in the Civilian Corps Creed. When the Army Civilian Corps was created in 2006 by the Secretary of the Army and Army Chief of Staff, the creed was formulated. By this, 230-year history of duty as a crucial part of the overall Army force organization was formalized. Army civilians have assumed an increasingly important leadership role since its creation. The Army Civilian Corps Creed has undergone revision in May 30, 2019 to add a new leadership function to the solidity and sustainability roles that Army Civilians currently conduct continuously (Archive, 2020).

3.2. Figurative level

The writer writes the same sentence *"I am an ARMY CIVILIAN"* both at the beginning and at the end of the creed. Since the writer considers this sentence as a key word to the identity of the army civilian member, he makes use of repetition to bring the sentence more focus and make it emphasized. In the sentence "*I live the Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage",* the writer uses metaphor to refer to the different army values which are abstract concepts that cannot be lived literally. The writer makes them his lifestyle which means he lives and applies these values to his behavior.

The writer employs 'hyperbole' in the sentence *"I provide leadership, stability, and continuity during war and peace"*. To make the staff proud of their field, the writer exaggerates the description of the things he provides because the abstract things he mentions cannot be provided or done individually. Table (3) below summarizes the frequency and the percentage of the figurative devices in Creed no.3

Table 3. Frequencies and Percentages of figurative devices in Creed no.3

Figurative Level							
Repetition		Personification		Metaphor		Hyperbole	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	33.33	0	0	1	33.33	1	33.33
Total of (F)	3			Total of %	100		

Table 3 shows repetition, metaphor, and hyperbole share the same frequency each occurring only once recording (33.33%). Repetition is used to emphasize the repeated words and sentences, while metaphor is used to make a hidden comparison. Hyperbole is employed to show exaggeration.

The following table 4 summarizes the main results of analyzing the selected texts.

Table 4. Frequency & percentage of figurative elements in the whole creeds

Creeds No.	Figurative Level							
	Repetition		Personification		Metaphor		Hyperbole	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	0	0	0	0	1	33.33	2	66.67
2	1	16.67	3	50	2	33.33	0	0
3	1	33.33	0	0	1	33.33	1	33.33
Total	2	16.66	3	25	4	33.33	3	25

According to table 4, metaphor has the highest frequency as it is used (4) times forming (33.33%). By metaphor, the writer makes a hidden comparison between two things or entities. Both personification and hyperbole is used (3) times each representing (25%).Via personification, the writer attributes animate characteristics to inanimate entities, while he employs hyperbole to exaggerate the characteristics and concepts related to the military field. Repetition comes last as it is used only twice representing

(16.66) of the total number of the figurative devices used in the whole data. It is mainly used for emphasizing particular concepts.

CONCLUSION

1. American MCs have their own generic distinctive stylistic devices that are used by the writers to convey the intended message of the creeds.
2. Almost all the figurative features listed in the levels of analysis in the adopted model can be found in the selected MCs, yet they differ in their degree of frequency.
3. Though American MCs are militaristic, formal, and public documents they are not clear of figurative devices. Each of the selected MCs contains figurative devices such as repetition, personification, metaphor, and hyperbole by which particular ideas are consolidated. The most frequently used device is the metaphor.
4. There is a clear integrity in the use of the figurative devices listed in the four elements. These features contribute together to convey the intended messages of the MCs and achieve their intended influence on the addressees.

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