

Linguistic Characteristics of Military Discourse in Literary Texts: A Comparative Study of English and Uzbek

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Abstract. This study investigates the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of military discourse in contemporary Uzbek and English fiction, focusing on five key novels: “Daryo ortidagi yig‘I” by Qo‘chqor Norqobil, “Quyosh qoraymas” by Oybek, “Qonli yo‘rgaklar” by Abdurashid Nurmurodov, and James Jones’s “The Thin Red Line” and “From Here to Eternity”. Using a philological approach that combines lexical-semantic analysis with discourse theory, the paper explores how authors construct meaning through vocabulary choices, stylistic devices, and narrative strategies. The analysis reveals that military fiction often employs emotionally charged expressions, war-related metaphors, and narrative techniques such as irony, fragmentation, and reader interaction. In Uzbek novels, traditional rhetorical figures like repetition and culturally embedded metaphors are prominent, reflecting themes of national identity and sacrifice. In contrast, Jones’s novels use military jargon, colloquial language, and shifting perspectives to depict psychological turmoil and institutional power dynamics. The study also categorizes the war theme’s presence in texts as macro-, meso-, or micro-inclusions, showing varying degrees of thematic centrality. A key concept is the lexical-semantic space (LSS), which frames the text as a network of meaning shaped by both authorial intention and reader interpretation. The findings highlight that military fiction, shaped by postmodernist tendencies and historical context, serves not only to narrate war but to provoke reflection on its moral, psychological, and cultural impact. Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how language in war literature encodes ideology, emotion, and collective memory.

INTRODUCTION

War has always left deep marks on human history, shaping not only politics and borders but also the way we tell stories. In literature, it is a theme that continues to attract writers and readers alike, offering a way to explore conflict, trauma, survival, and the resilience of the human spirit. Military fiction—whether rooted in personal memory or national history—gives voice to the silent costs of war and invites readers to reflect on its meaning from different angles. In both Uzbek and English literary traditions, authors have approached this theme with a variety of narrative and linguistic tools, drawing on their unique cultural experiences to portray the realities of war in powerful ways.

This article examines how military discourse is constructed in five selected contemporary novels. Although these texts come from different worlds, they share a concern with how language can capture the chaos, fear, courage, and complexity of military life. The study explores how authors use specific vocabulary, metaphors, stylistic techniques, and narrative structures to express both individual and collective experiences of war.

The approach taken here is philological, combining linguistic and literary analysis. Particular attention is given to what we call the lexical-semantic space—the network of word choices and stylistic devices that shape the meaning of a text. This concept allows us to trace how authors create

not just a story, but a world filled with implied values, emotions, and ideological positions. We also consider how readers interact with these texts, actively interpreting and contributing to their meaning based on personal, cultural, or historical background.

The study is especially relevant today, as war remains a painful and urgent reality for many societies. Modern fiction increasingly reflects this, often turning to fragmented narratives, shifting perspectives, and irony to mirror the confusion and contradictions of wartime life. In Uzbek literature, writers often use poetic devices and emotionally rich language rooted in national traditions, while English-language fiction—especially postmodern works like those of James Jones—tends to experiment with structure, voice, and realism. By comparing these approaches, we gain a deeper understanding of how literature helps us process war—not just as an event, but as a human experience with lasting consequences.

In short, this introduction lays the groundwork for a detailed analysis of military discourse across languages and cultures. It aims to show how authors use language not only to tell a story, but also to shape memory, express pain, and provoke thought. Through this lens, military fiction becomes more than a genre—it becomes a conversation between writer and reader about some of the most difficult truths of our time.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employs a qualitative, interdisciplinary approach grounded in philological analysis to examine the linguistic and stylistic features of military discourse in selected literary texts. The research corpus consists of five novels drawn from Uzbek and English-language military fiction: “Daryo ortidagi yig‘i” by Qo‘chqor Norqobil (2021), “Quyosh qoraymas” by Oybek (2020 edition), “Qonli yo‘rgaklar” by Abdurashid Nurmurodov (2019), and James Jones’s “The Thin Red Line” (1991) and “From Here to Eternity” (1998).

The analysis focuses on the concept of lexical-semantic space (LSS), which refers to the organized system of lexical choices and stylistic constructions that together shape the thematic and ideological framework of the text. This framework allows for the interpretation of how authors linguistically construct war and how these constructions influence reader perception. The study integrates methods from literary stylistics, discourse analysis, and lexical semantics to identify and interpret key linguistic markers—such as metaphor, irony, repetition, and military-specific terminology.

In addition, the philological method provides the flexibility to include extralinguistic dimensions such as historical, cultural, and socio-political context. These contextual factors are essential for understanding the deeper pragmatic and ideological functions of military discourse. The analysis also considers the role of the reader as a co-creator of meaning, acknowledging that interpretation is shaped by cultural background, historical awareness, and personal experience.

By combining textual, contextual, and interpretive analysis, this methodological framework facilitates a comprehensive understanding of how military fiction communicates complex realities of war and conflict across languages and cultures.

RESULTS

The comparative analysis of the five selected novels has yielded a comprehensive view of how war is portrayed through language in two distinct cultural and literary traditions. The study, grounded in a linguistic-stylistic analysis, focuses on how narrative techniques, lexical choices, stylistic tools, and authorial interventions shape the thematic and ideological weight of military fiction.

A notable outcome of the analysis is that without a detailed examination of language and literary structure, these texts could not fully function as works of literature. Language in these novels is not merely a vehicle for storytelling; it is central to building atmosphere, delivering critique, and positioning the reader within the emotional and ideological world of the text. The authors’ use of narrative voice—ranging from first-person to omniscient narration—along with dialogue and rhetorical commentary, frames the reader’s experience and reinforces the message being conveyed. For instance, several authors use emotionally loaded or aggressive vocabulary to expose injustice,

betrayal, and violence—particularly in addressing themes such as political corruption, oppression, and collective suffering.

Moreover, the results affirm that linguistic and extralinguistic factors—including historical events, cultural memory, national ideology, and political struggle—profoundly influence the formation of lexical combinations and the deployment of stylistic means. As such, military fiction is not only a reflection of wartime experience but a means of shaping public memory, national consciousness, and individual identity.

This study draws upon the concept of lexical-semantic space (LSS) to frame the structural unity of each text. Within this framework, the arrangement of lexical items, their recurrence, emotional charge, and stylistic function are seen as deliberate acts of meaning-making. Each novel constructs a unique LSS that reflects its cultural foundation and rhetorical aims, allowing for multi-layered interpretation.

A further point of interest is the presence of different degrees of war theme inclusion across the novels, which offers insight into how central or peripheral war is to each narrative. Additionally, the study identified recurring lexical-semantic and stylistic patterns that appear across both Uzbek and American texts, despite cultural and narrative differences.

1. Levels of War Theme Inclusion

The military theme occupies varying narrative prominence across the novels. To categorize this, the following inclusion types were observed:

Macro-inclusions: In “Daryo ortidagi yig‘i”, “Quyosh qoraymas”, and “Qonli yo‘rgaklar”, the war theme dominates the storyline, forming the central narrative thread. These texts focus on national struggle, individual and collective sacrifice, and moral endurance in the face of conflict. The narratives are driven by wartime events and their aftermath, and war is depicted as a defining force in shaping characters and society.

Meso-inclusions: In *From Here to Eternity*, war is present but coexists with other narrative concerns—such as military routine, interpersonal tensions, and social injustice within the armed forces. The war theme in such texts serves more as a backdrop for psychological exploration and social commentary than as the central conflict.

Micro-inclusions: In *The Thin Red Line*, war is symbolically and emotionally embedded in the narrative rather than overtly dominant. The story is structured through individual reflections, fragmented memory, and existential questioning. War is treated not just as an event but as a philosophical and psychological condition, often appearing in metaphoric or internalized form.

2. Lexical-Semantic Patterns

The study identified a series of dominant lexical-semantic tendencies in both Uzbek and American texts, though often realized through culturally distinct expressions:

Use of military terminology: All five novels make extensive use of military-specific lexicon—including references to ranks, commands, weapons, and tactical operations. This terminology serves to anchor the narrative in a credible military setting.

Emotive lexis: Uzbek texts, in particular, show a high frequency of emotionally charged language, reinforcing ideals of patriotism, resilience, and martyrdom. The lexicon is often nationalistic, moralistic, and deeply metaphorical.

Poetic and rhetorical devices: Traditional rhetorical forms such as takror (repetition), muvofiqlik (parallelism), and istiora (metaphor) appear prominently in Uzbek war literature. These devices elevate the tone and contribute to the lyrical quality of the texts.

Layered narrative perspectives: American texts, especially those by James Jones, make frequent use of free indirect speech, interior monologue, and dialogue shifts. These techniques create psychological depth and highlight the emotional complexity of military life.

Ideologically loaded word clusters: Both sets of texts use specific word groupings to express thematic motifs—such as duty, fear, corruption, courage, or spiritual resistance—often creating patterns of lexical repetition that intensify the message.

3. Stylistic Devices

Stylistic choices in the novels serve not only aesthetic purposes but also thematic and ideological functions:

Irony and satire: Particularly in Jones's fiction, irony and pastiche are employed to critique military institutions and societal expectations. These postmodern strategies challenge the authority of the narrator and open space for reader interpretation.

Symbolism and open endings: The Uzbek novels frequently use symbolic imagery and unresolved endings to evoke reflection and moral inquiry. These elements allow the reader to explore alternate meanings and engage personally with the narrative.

Temporal distortion and collage: Especially in *The Thin Red Line*, the temporal flow is disrupted through flashbacks, ellipses, and non-linear progression. These techniques mirror the fragmented psychological state of soldiers and challenge conventional narrative structure.

Stylistic convergence: Across all novels, stylistic devices are often layered—such as metaphor combined with irony or symbolism infused with narrative repetition—to enhance expressiveness and amplify authorial viewpoint.

DISCUSSION

Contemporary Military fiction

Our primary goal in discussing current literary fiction in this article is to examine the lexical-semantic and stylistic quirks seen in postmodernist character writings. It is therefore unique in that it relies on literary heritage and has philosophical connotations. One characteristic that sets postmodernism apart is its ongoing interest in history, both English and global. This explains in part why the war topic is so prevalent in modern novelistic language. Such unique characteristics of literature from the 1980s and 1990s are noted by the researcher: a strong interest in the past, including historical events and processes from the distant past as well as those from the more recent past; a fascination with foreign locales, personalities, and experiences; a significant emphasis on genre diversity; and metafictional interests. For as long as war existed, writers have been trying to understand it, to transfer its horrors from the battlefield into the narrative. In particular, modern MF emphasizes the most recent conflicts. The winners of the Walter Scott Prize, which is given for historical fiction, recently discovered that World War II events served as "the most fertile ground" for their works. Nine percent of the submitted texts were set in World War I, while fourteen percent were set in World War II. In addition to the overwhelming drama of the war itself, the earlier researchers (writer and chair of the Historical Writers' Association) characterize war as "rich dramatic territory": "It also put everything into flux." People faced difficult moral dilemmas as the world changed and erupted all around them. What exactly forces contemporary authors to appeal to the past and the theme of war in particular?

*Lexical-semantic space and stylistic features of contemporary Military fiction such as Qo'chqor Norqobil's "Daryo ortidagi yig'i", (2021), Muso Toshmuhammad o'g'li Oybek's "Quyosh qoraymas" (2020), Abdurashid Nurmurodov's "Qonli yo'rgaklar" (2019), James Jones's (1991) *The Thin Red Line* and (1998) *From Here to Eternity* .*

Undoubtedly, authors are drawn to urgent issues like global warming and foreign wars, but there is still a significant thematic and formal interest in the past. For instance, *James Jone (1991)* uses in his *The Thin Red Line and (1998) From Here to Eternity* typical for the 21st century imitation of the previous literary styles and devices. The modern English book is characterized by its polysemy and uncertainty of meaning. Because of this adaptability, modern fiction may incorporate experiences from a variety of literary genres, including experimentalism and realism, as well as from many socioeconomic classes, generations, and countries. Including letters, diaries, and photographs in a

literary work demonstrates the author's intention to persuade the reader that the events portrayed are true.

According to the author's ideas and opinions, the tale world is created with the intention of evoking a certain reaction in the reader. Therefore, a work of fiction is an expression of the unique writing style of the author, reflecting both reality and the author's imaginative, fictional universe. In his research on the impact of the prominent lexical-semantic combinations and potential implicit meanings in fictional texts, M. Toolan concentrates on the overuse or purposeful underuse of specific lexical units¹. When viewed as a whole, the lexical units' arrangement in the textual space guarantees its compositional wholeness. The fictional text's lexical-semantic space is often organized linguistically on two levels: the lexical (surface) and semantic (deep) levels. The use of various lexical methods and combinations can enhance the same message. The sense encoded by the author—the tangible manifestation of the author's worldview—and the reader's perception of the text are both covered by the semantic level. Using lexical style elements like irony, allusions, quotes, epigraphs, metaphors, metonymy, and similes is a hallmark of the postmodernist mindset. The purpose of their inclusion in the text is to provide the reader a unique impression. In the postmodernist era, the reader actively co-authors the meaning of the text since it is written for an intelligent reader who can see concepts and patterns that are concealed from view. As said by Ch. Warner, "We have no reason to read if literature does not captivate us."² This makes the MF of the early 21st century unique in that it pays a lot of attention to the past. Contemporary writers prompt us to consider the impact of war on an individual's daily existence and provide strategies for mitigating its effects by portraying (or merely bringing up) the subject. The war and battle events that occur nowadays impact the appeal of military themes in contemporary literary works. In addition, readers' fascination with military subjects is expanding quickly as a result of human brutality, which has stunned everyone on the planet. Therefore, considering the lexical-semantic features of these fictional prose writings, the study of them is highly significant from the pragmatic-discourse and anthropocentric points of view. It is feasible to do an integrated examination of the lexical-semantic space of modern MF using a sophisticated philological method, accounting for all the extralingual elements affecting the creation of a literary piece.

Dominant lexical combinations and their lexical-semantic features in contemporary Military fiction such as Qo'chqor Norqobil's "Daryo ortidagi yig'i", (2021), Muso Toshmuhammad o'g'li Oybek's "Quyosh qoraymas" (2020), Abdurashid Nurmurodov's "Qonli yo'rgaklar" (2019), James Jones's (1991) The Thin Red Line and (1998) From Here to Eternity.

Genre diffusion—"the coexistence of widely diverging novelistic genres"—is a phenomena that defines contemporary literature. Similarly, MF typically blends aspects of many genres, and the war subject is seen on multiple levels: as the text's main theme or as its micro-inclusions in the form of brief remarks or references. The broad grouping of the writings is based on a similar topic, while there may be major differences in many other areas. As a result, we categorize the current MF in this article into three primary groups: fictional texts that prominently feature the topic of war (macro-inclusions of war theme)³, those that only partially do so (meso-inclusions), and those that do so in micro-inclusions. The first set of writings focuses mostly on the atrocities of war, such as holocaust, concentration camps, person's fate broken by war, for instance, *Qo'chqor Norqobil's "Daryo ortidagi yig'i", (2021), Muso Toshmuhammad o'g'li Oybek's "Quyosh qoraymas" (2020), Abdurashid Nurmurodov's "Qonli yo'rgaklar" (2019)*.

James Jones's war novels *The Thin Red Line* (1991) and *From Here to Eternity* (1998), focuses on their lexical, stylistic, syntactic, and pragmatic dimensions. Jones uses colloquial English, military jargon, and emotionally charged terminology to create a genuine military communication

¹ Toolan, M. (2013). *Language in literature: An introduction to stylistics*. London and New York: Routledge. ISBN 0-340-66214-X

² Warner, Ch. (2014). *Literary pragmatics and stylistics* In M. Burke (Ed.) *The Routledge handbook of stylistics* (362-377). London and New York: Routledge.

³ Fayzulloyeva , M. (2024). BADIY MATN XUSUSIYATLARI. Развитие и инновации в науке, 3(5), 88–93.

environment, as the research demonstrates through a philological and discourse-analytic lens. Free indirect speech, realistic conversation, and symbolic language are all used in both books to illustrate the moral uncertainty, hierarchical conflict, and psychological anguish of wartime life⁴. While *From Here to Eternity* reflects a realist style rooted in the pre-war barracks life of soldiers, *The Thin Red Line* incorporates elements of postmodernism, such as fragmented narrative structure and shifting perspectives. According to the research, Jones skillfully combines documentary veracity with literary creativity in his language choices, providing a complex representation of American military identity and soldierly experience.

Meanwhile, examining the linguistic features of three contemporary Uzbek war novels — Qo‘chqor Norqobil’s *Daryo ortidagi yig‘i* (2021), Muso Toshmuhammad o‘g‘li Oybek’s *Quyosh qoraymas* (2020), and Abdurashid Nurmurodov’s *Qonli yo‘rgaklar* represent rich examples of Uzbek military fiction, utilizing emotionally charged language, symbolic metaphors, and expressive lexical-semantic choices to reflect the horrors of war, national identity, and personal sacrifice⁵. The analysis highlights the use of traditional Uzbek rhetorical devices, including repetition (*takror*), parallelism (*muvofiqlik*), and culturally embedded metaphors (*istioralar*), which enhance the emotive and ideological impact of the narratives. The books’ lexicon is heavily replete with lyrical metaphors, war-related language, and honorific terms that demonstrate military bravery and martyrdom⁶. Style-wise, authors combine literary realism with poetic writing, and pragmatically, the language expresses the social ideals of courage, responsibility, and moral fortitude. In the Uzbek literary tradition, these language techniques provide a realistic and culturally based portrayal of the military experience.

A distinctive characteristic of postmodernism, especially in the past 20 years, is its intense focus on the past and history. Despite employing historically correct toponyms, postmodernism’s “new historical novels” frequently alter historical personalities or the actual events, highlighting the fiction as artificial. Because of the diversity of styles, genres, points of view, and temporal distortion that characterizes modern writing, authors frequently use collage as a technique to guarantee the coherence of narrative and compositional structure. They undermine the story’s linearity, giving the impression that there are several and varied perspectives on the universe. In order to show their own author’s imagined world, these authors usually engage the reader in conversation and speak directly to them. Such a conversation typically takes the shape of a game. I know what you’re thinking is an example of the technique the author uses to get the reader to participate in the process of imagining the events or their predictions in the story. You want me to continue the narrative. It’s the only tale from the past that still piques your curiosity; it’s the only thing remaining visible in my frayed flag. In addition to appealing to the reader, the text’s frequent use of irony draws his or her attention to the issue the author highlights. Throughout the modern MF, irony in the narrative of conflict is commonly seen⁷. In this way, the author highlights the ridiculousness of war—that is, the ridiculousness of young people viewing it as something patriotic and exalted when they were not fully aware of what it would actually bring into their life. In modern literary texts, parody is frequently associated with pastiche, which is the blending of several styles, genres, storylines, and stylistic devices—all of which are crucial to the creation of the work. It is sometimes hard to distinguish between parodies and the text because they are so closely entwined. Generally speaking, the author’s selection of the war topic is dictated by the war events, whether they are historical or modern. Its linguistic explanation in the literary work conveys the author’s perspective on the world and how he or she feels about its volatility. Social elements such as the intended reader, the literary text’s topic, the author’s goal, and the social environment of interaction influence the choice of lexical tools. MF uses carefully chosen vocabulary combinations in order to convey the author’s goal of making a strong impression on the reader: to fully depict the atrocities of war and to plead to humanity for social harmony and peace. A structural entity definition is necessary since the text is never just a linear series of sentences. By using lexical

⁴ Cobley, E. (1995). Postmodernist war fiction: Findley’s The Wars. Canadian Literature, No. 147, pp. 98-124.

⁵ Ўринбоев Б., Кўнгуров Р., Лапасов Ж. Бадий текстнинг лингвистикахлили. – Т.: Ўқитувчи, 1990.

⁶ Йўлдошев М. Бадий матннинг лисоний таҳлили. –Т.: Фан, 2008.

⁷ Kaiter, E. (2016). The war novel, a modernist and postmodernist representation based on history and fiction. Multicultural Representations. Literature and Discourse as Forms of Dialogue, pp. 204-208.

and stylistic strategies that result in a single semantic entity, the LSS of the modern MF is kept cohesive.

Lexical combinations and strategies	Their lexical-semantic features
the selection of the war theme	is related to the current state of instability; it makes one reflect and consider how conflict affects a person's day-to-day existence.
micro-inclusions of the war theme in the text	illustrate the ways in which conflict permeates and persists throughout our lives.
orientation towards historiographic metaliterature; parody	encourage the reinterpretation of a well-known story irony.
dialogue with the reader (often in a playful way)	highlights the ridiculousness of war and draws the reader in by having them imagine the events or predict what will happen in the story.
proposing several perspectives on one event	gives the reader the possibility to analyse the situation by him- / herself and to decide which side to take
temporal distortion, collage, retrospection	create the effect of plurality and relativity in the world comprehension
fragmentation, pastiche	undermine the author's 'authority'; create the feeling of relativity
photographic models, descriptions, detailisation	create the effect of accuracy of the narrative mystery or a secret intrigues and induces to search for the truth
prompts and hints	provide the reader the opportunity to research the heroes' many mysteries on their own.
symbolism	causes the reader to pause and reflect
open ending	makes one consider the various ways the narrative may evolve.
allusions, quotations	make it seem like everything in our lives is repeating and circling all the time.
epigraphs	establish the text's associated context and convey its central concept or subject.
original metaphors, metonymy, similes	depict the full scope of war's atrocities and encourage action to stop future calamities of this kind.
repetitions	highlight a particular issue or concept of the writer.
stylistic convergence	makes the writing more expressive and highlights the author's viewpoint

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, the peculiarity of these literary works mostly belong to the beginning of the 21st century, are a different degree of the war theme representation, which can be observed at the levels of macro-, meso- and micro-inclusions in the outline of a literary text. The military and combat events that occur now impact the appeal of military themes in contemporary fiction. The lexical units, carefully chosen by the author in line with his or her goal, have a significant impact on how literary works are interpreted and how they generally affect readers. In order to establish the main tendencies of lexical-semantic actualization of the war theme in contemporary MF with macro-, meso-, and micro-inclusions of military themes, as well as to conduct an integrated analysis of the lexical combinations in the lexical-semantic space of contemporary MF, their lexicalsemantic features, and their effect on the reader, a philological approach made it possible to take a fresh look at the contemporary literary text and the processes associated with its production. This was made possible by the consideration of all the extralingual factors that influence the intricate process of a literary text construction. In order to reproduce the unique image of the war and post-war era, vocabulary combinations designating military *realia* and acts are used. Modern writers encourage us to consider the impact of war on daily

life by illustrating or even just bringing up the subject, providing strategies for dealing with psychological trauma. Using vivid instances from the past, the author reflects on the perniciousness and folly of war and urges humanity to avoid a similar catastrophe in the future. These are some of the main elements that define the author's choice of war subject. By applying the philological method to the analysis of the text's lexical-semantic structure, new avenues for investigation into modern military fiction are made possible. This article appears to be helpful in the future study of fictional works with military themes, as the war topic is becoming increasingly popular these days.

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