



Socio-Aesthetic Realignment and Regional Heroism: Tracing the Resonance of Aceh's Cultural Identity in the Poetics of Angkatan 45

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Abstract

The emergence of *Angkatan 45* (the Generation of 1945) marks a critical milestone in the evolutionary trajectory of modern Indonesian literature, characterized by a radical departure from colonial and classical aesthetic constraints. While mainstream literary histories frequently examine this linguistic revolution through a centralized, macro-national lens, few studies investigate how regional identities, specifically the sociopolitical and cultural landscape of Aceh, intersected with this structural transformation. This study investigates the distinct poetic characteristics, philosophical conceptions, and structural dynamics of *Angkatan 45* poetry by contextualizing its development within the historical consciousness and resilient cultural framework of Acehnese society during the revolutionary period. Employing a qualitative descriptive research design integrated with a critical historiographical review and micro-level structural textual analysis, this research analyzes the dual ideological pillars of Expressionism and Realism across selected poetic texts and the cultural manifesto of the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang*. The findings reveal that the aesthetic deconstruction enacted by *Angkatan 45*, characterized by raw syntactic economy and colloquial diction, was deeply informed by peripheral struggles, where regional cultural symbols and Islamic humanism served as vitalist markers of anti-colonial defiance. Ultimately, this paper highlights the pedagogical and socio-cultural value of preserving this decentralized literary genealogy, demonstrating how a period of intense high-stakes crisis successfully revolutionized the linguistic, semantic, and inclusive fabric of modern Indonesian discourse while preserving local cultural sovereignty.

Keywords: Modern Indonesian Poetry, Angkatan 45, Acehnese Culture, Socio-Aesthetic Realignment, Universal Humanism

Introduction

Literary movements do not emerge within a sociopolitical vacuum. Instead, they function as highly responsive mechanisms that reflect the structural shifts, cultural realignments, and psychological transformations of the specific societies from which they are produced (Bodden, 2022; Hadler, 2019; Tan, 2021). Within the evolutionary trajectory of Southeast Asian literature, and specifically modern Indonesian poetry, the relationship between regional historical rupture and linguistic innovation is remarkably pronounced (Day, 2020; Hoon, 2023; Rajah, 2021). Although modern Indonesian verse began to establish its formal contours in the early 1920s, its



initial stages were heavily characterized by an aesthetic dependency on centralized colonial and classical frameworks (Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Moriyama, 2022; Nugroho, 2020). Early twentieth-century writers frequently relied on traditional, highly structured oral forms such as the *pantun* and *syair* to articulate contemporary experiences (Arps, 2020; Formichi, 2021; Rahman & Salleh, 2019).

However, the profound sociopolitical upheavals of the 1940s, marked by the transition from Dutch administration to wartime occupation and the subsequent national revolution, precipitated an unprecedented aesthetic crisis (Maier, 2021; Ricklefs & Lockhart, 2020; Rizal, 2020). This historical fracture gave rise to Angkatan 45 (the Generation of 1945), a loose collective of avant-garde writers who radically dismantled existing literary paradigms to construct a sovereign modern identity (Goebel, 2023; Pradopo, 2019; Supriyanto, 2021; van Dijk, 2024). Crucially, this period of intense transformation was not confined to metropolitan centers but was deeply enriched by the radical political consciousness and historical resilience of peripheral regions (Suryadi & Yusuf, 2021; Ward & Tarigan, 2022; Witra, 2023), most notably the society and cultural landscape of Aceh (Feener, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2022; Yusuf & Hasan, 2022).

To fully comprehend the magnitude of the aesthetic departure initiated by Angkatan 45 within a localized framework, it is necessary to examine the unique position of Aceh in the wider genealogy of Indonesian literary history (Feener, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2022; Reid, 2018). Prior to the 1945 revolution, Acehnese intellectual discourse possessed a long and formidable tradition of resistance literature, heavily rooted in Islamic episteme and epic oral poetry such as the *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (Alfian, 2021; Hadi, 2019; Iskandar & Yusuf, 2023). Teeuw (1980) establishes that modern Indonesian literature developed through a complex dialectic of responding to, adopting, and deviating from pre-existing traditional rules—a foundational premise that contemporary scholars continue to expand in the context of regional agency (Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Nugroho, 2020; Rizal, 2020).

When the preceding Pujangga Baru movement, spanning from 1933 to 1942, attempted to modernize Indonesian verse by integrating European romanticism, their linguistic choices remained deeply embedded in an elite register that prioritized aesthetic harmony over real-world engagement (Foulcher, 2018; Maier, 2021; Supriyanto, 2021). This stance felt fundamentally detached from the visceral, high-stakes realities of regional struggles (Ward & Tarigan, 2022; Witra, 2023). The onset of the Indonesian National Revolution completely shattered this idealistic detachment (Goebel, 2023; Ricklefs & Lockhart, 2020; van Dijk, 2024). In Aceh, the revolution was experienced as both a holy war and a socio-political restructuring, forcing a complete renegotiation of how literary language could capture the dual imperatives of religious devotion and modern national sovereignty (Formichi, 2021; Suryadi & Yusuf, 2021; Yusuf & Hasan, 2022).

The primary mechanism of this aesthetic transformation across the archipelago was the formal codification of a new cultural vision, famously articulated in the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* (The Gelanggang Credo) in 1950. Through this manifesto, the writers of Angkatan 45 proclaimed their independence from both parochial constraints and Western hegemony, embracing an unprecedented word economy, colloquial vocabulary, and a stark, dynamic register that mirrored the volatile nature of the revolution (Bodden, 2022; Goebel, 2023; Maier, 2021). Literary critic Jassin (1967) famously championed this cohort, positioning them as the authentic pioneers who replaced decorative sentimentality with an unvarnished engagement with human existence canonical framework that contemporary critics analyze through the lens of early postcolonial sovereignty (Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Nugroho, 2020; Supriyanto, 2021).

However, contemporary scholarship has frequently overlooked how the core tenets of this movement, particularly its emphasis on vitalism, individual heroism, and universal humanism, mirrored and intersected with the cultural values of the Acehnese society (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Pradopo, 2019; Witra, 2023). Acehnese cultural networks had historically weaponized cultural artifacts to assert political and spiritual independence, making the region a fertile but unexamined landscape for the dissemination and localized reconstruction of Angkatan 45 poetics (Alfian, 2021; Feener, 2020; Suryadi & Yusuf, 2021).

Despite the extensive documentation surrounding the biography of major metropolitan figures like Chairil Anwar, a critical knowledge gap persists in contemporary scholarship

regarding the precise conceptual synthesis of regional identities and national aesthetic movements within Angkatan 45 poetry (Day, 2020; Rajah, 2021; Ward & Tarigan, 2022). Existing literary histories frequently categorize this movement using broad, centralized descriptive labels, completely oversimplifying the complex socio-cultural tensions between the center and the periphery (Hadler, 2019; Hoon, 2023; Tan, 2021). Scholars routinely analyze either the subjective outpouring of the soul, categorized as Expressionism, or the harsh documentation of wartime suffering, categorized as Realism, as generic national attributes (Maier, 2021; Ricklefs & Lockhart, 2020; Rizal, 2020). They do so without acknowledging how these poetic strategies were received, reconstructed, or informed by the distinct cultural codes of regional societies like Aceh (Iskandar & Yusuf, 2023; Yusuf & Hasan, 2022).

There is a noticeable lack of rigorous textual and historical analysis demonstrating how the extreme linguistic reductionism and raw vitalism found in this poetry served a dual purpose: asserting modern artistic autonomy while simultaneously validating the local history of anti-colonial resistance and the cultural dignity of the regions (Arps, 2020; Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Goebel, 2023). Consequently, contemporary discourse often reduces Angkatan 45 to a localized Jakarta phenomenon rather than examining it as a decentralized linguistic revolution that drew immense ideological strength from regional cultural landscapes (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Ward & Tarigan, 2022; Witra, 2023).

To address this empirical and theoretical gap, the primary objective of this research is to systematically analyze the evolutionary trajectory of modern Indonesian poetry, focusing specifically on how the structural, linguistic, and ideological mechanisms that define *Angkatan 45* intersected with the context, history, and cultural framework of Acehnese society. Driven by this objective, this study seeks to answer three central research questions. First, how did the socio-aesthetic realities of regional resistance, particularly within the context of Aceh's revolutionary history, inform and reshape the expressive and realist dimensions of *Angkatan 45* poetry? Second, in what ways did the transition from rigid classical meters to free verse resonate with the traditional oral and structural paradigms of regional literature in Sumatra? Third, how does the cultural manifesto of the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* conceptualize universal humanism in a way that aligns with or complicates the localized cultural and religious values of the Acehnese people?

To address these questions, this study employs a qualitative descriptive research design integrated with a critical historiographical review and structural textual analysis. The primary data corpus consists of selected poetic works from the *Angkatan 45* era, historical documents outlining regional responses to the national revolution, and the formal text of the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang*. Data collection was conducted via systematic documentary tracking and purposive sampling of authorized literary anthologies and regional historical records. The analytical framework utilizes qualitative content analysis, wherein the selected texts are coded according to two primary dimensions: internal structural attributes, including colloquial diction and syntactic compression, and extra-aesthetic markers, such as regional heroism, existential vitalism, and socio-political critique. This systematic categorization ensures that the linguistic patterns identified are directly traceable to the specific socio-cultural matrix of post-colonial Indonesia and the unique cultural environment of Aceh.

This investigation makes three distinct contributions to the fields of literary historiography, regional cultural studies, and applied linguistics. First, it offers a rigorous conceptual framework that explains how regional identities and localized histories of resistance operate not as peripheral footnotes, but as foundational pillars within national post-colonial literature. Second, by examining the structural transformation of Indonesian verse through a regional lens, this study illuminates the precise stylistic shifts that allowed the modern Indonesian language to become an inclusive vehicle for diverse local societies. Finally, this research enhances the pedagogical framework for regional literary education, providing valuable insights for contemporary researchers analyzing the ongoing relationship between national integration and local cultural sovereignty in modern Indonesian discourse.

For clarity throughout this investigation, several key terms must be explicitly defined within the context of this study. *Angkatan 45* refers specifically to the generation of Indonesian writers active between 1940 and 1955 who initiated a structural and philosophical break from traditional

literary conventions. *Acehnese cultural framework* denotes the collective system of values, historical consciousness of resistance, and socio-religious codes that define the identity of the society in Aceh. *Linguistic economy* is defined as the deliberate reduction of syntactic and lexical elements to maximize semantic density, a technique that contrasts sharply with the ornamental language of earlier generations. Finally, *universal humanism* refers to the ideological stance that rejects chauvinistic nationalism, positioning the modern identity as an equal participant in global human culture while remaining deeply rooted in local historical specificities.

To present these findings systematically, this report is organized into five clearly defined sections. Following this introductory section, Section 2 provides an extensive review of the literature, tracing the genealogy of Indonesian poetry from its traditional oral roots through the colonial institutionalization of *Balai Pustaka* and *Pujangga Baru*, with special emphasis on the literary history of Sumatra and Aceh. Section 3 details the qualitative descriptive methodology, outlining the corpus selection criteria, regional historical context, and the textual coding mechanisms used to evaluate the data. Section 4 presents the results and discussion, offering a close textual analysis of the selected works and mapping the convergence of regional cultural identities with national poetic shifts. Finally, Section 5 concludes the report by summarizing the core insights, acknowledging research limitations, and offering strategic recommendations for future scholarship in applied linguistics and regional cultural studies.

Methods

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design integrated with a critical historiographical approach and structural textual analysis. A qualitative descriptive framework is highly appropriate for this investigation as it allows for a nuanced, comprehensive documentation of linguistic and socio-cultural phenomena within their distinct historical environments without transforming them into numerical abstractions. Rather than relying on static quantitative frequencies alone, this design prioritizes the underlying semantic shifts and creative mechanisms that characterized the transition of Indonesian verse during the revolutionary period, specifically within the regional context of Aceh. By combining descriptive qualitative inquiry with critical historiography, this study maps the development of modern Indonesian literature not merely as a centralized chronological sequence of publications, but as a decentralized socio-aesthetic realignment driven by regional networks and local histories of resistance. The structural analysis component focuses on the micro-level properties of the text, examining how localized artistic and philosophical values manifested through concrete syntactic choices.

Data Source and Corpus Selection

The data source for this investigation comprises a carefully curated corpus of modern Indonesian literary artifacts, cultural manifestos, and regional historical records produced during the pivotal transitional era between 1940 and 1955. This timeframe corresponds directly to the historical parameters of Angkatan 45 as established in classical literary periodization. To satisfy the specific aims and scope of analyzing this movement within the context of Acehnese society and culture, the primary textual data are drawn from authorized anthologies containing the works of definitive pioneers such as Chairil Anwar, Sitor Situmorang, and Asrul Sani, alongside the regional writings and cultural commentary of Sumatran intellectuals active during the revolution. Additionally, the corpus includes the full text of the Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang published formally in 1950. Purposive sampling was employed to select specific poems and manifestos that explicitly embody the dual ideological pillars of Expressionism and Realism while reflecting themes of regional heroism, anti-colonial defiance, and Islamic humanism.

Instruments and Data Collection

In qualitative literary and cultural research, the primary research instrument is the researcher functioning as an analytical human instrument, equipped with specialized theoretical knowledge in structural poetics, post-colonial literary theory, sociology of literature, and regional sumatran historiography. To ensure objectivity, reliability, and systematization during the data gathering

process, the researcher developed a structured textual observation matrix as a supplementary instrument. Data collection was executed using a rigorous documentary tracking procedure. This involved locating, verifying, and transcribing the original text of the chosen poems and historical manifestos from authoritative digital and physical archives, including repositories specializing in Sumatran and Acehnese revolutionary history. Each textual unit, consisting of stanzas, lines, and specific lexical items, was systematically logged into the observation matrix to protect the integrity of the data from subjective misinterpretation.

Procedures

The operational procedures for gathering the data were executed in three distinct, sequential phases to guarantee methodological rigor. The first phase involved a comprehensive bibliographical search across institutional repositories and regional literary archives to compile documented poems, essays, and manifestos attributed to the target writers and intellectual circles between 1940 and 1955. In the second phase, a strict exclusion and inclusion protocol was applied; texts that lacked clear historical contextualization or suffered from conflicting transcriptions in secondary literature were excluded from the final analytical corpus. The third phase consisted of verbatim text extraction, where the selected poetry and historical declarations were digitized and organized chronologically. This chronological and contextual categorization allowed the researcher to track the progressive abandonment of classical meters alongside the emergence of localized expressions of resistance across the specified fifteen-year period.

Measurement and Analytical Categories

To operationalize qualitative concepts for systematic analysis without relying on statistical measurements, this study utilizes a rigorous textual coding framework based on predefined linguistic, thematic, and cultural categories. The internal structural properties of the poetry are measured against two core stylistic dimensions: linguistic economy and colloquialization. Linguistic economy is assessed by evaluating instances of syntactic compression and ellipsis, contrasting these patterns directly with the ornamental phrasing typical of the earlier Balai Pustaka and Pujangga Baru periods. Colloquialization is tracked by documenting the deliberate integration of everyday vernacular, regional terminology, and urgent registers that broke traditional taboos of literary decorum. On an extra-aesthetic level, the ideological orientation of the text is categorized by identifying indicators of existential individualism, which represents Expressionism, and indicators of socio-political critique regarding wartime suffering and regional heroism, which represents Realism and the cultural values of Acehnese resistance.

Data Analysis

The collected textual data are processed and interpreted using qualitative content analysis, following a recursive four stage analytical protocol consisting of data condensation, data display, coding and categorization, and conclusion drawing or verification. During data condensation, long poetic texts and lengthy historical manifestos are broken down into manageable meaning units, such as specific phrases or stanzas that contain dense metaphorical, structural, or ideological significance. In the data display phase, these units are organized within the structural observation matrix to contrast the internal poetic structures alongside the extra-aesthetic regional markers. Next, the coding and categorization process applies the predefined criteria of Expressionism, Realism, and universal humanism to the text, mapping out exactly how a single literary artifact can reconcile an individualistic outpouring of the soul with an unvarnished documentation of regional social reality. Finally, the verification phase contextualizes these linguistic and thematic findings within the broader socio-political history of the 1945 Indonesian revolution and the specific cultural framework of Acehnese society. This ensures that the final interpretations are theoretically sound, free from modern anachronisms, and capable of demonstrating how Angkatan 45 functioned as a decentralized linguistic and cultural revolution.

Findings

The analysis of the literary corpus and accompanying historical manifestos indicates that the structural and ideological realignment initiated by Angkatan 45 functioned as a decentralized

phenomenon. The data reveal that the stylistic deconstruction of classical Malay verse and the integration of universal humanism were heavily informed by the socio-political climate and cultural values of regional societies, particularly the historical consciousness of resistance in Aceh. The results are presented objectively and organized under three distinct thematic categories: the deconstruction of classical meters and the rise of regional vitalism, the linguistic economy of revolutionary registers, and the cross-cultural synthesis of universal humanism with regional Islamic episteme.

The foremost structural transformation identified in the corpus is the total dismantling of rigid, symmetrical stanzaic frameworks and traditional rhyme schemes characteristic of the pre-war period. Prior generations, such as those institutionalized during the Balai Pustaka and Pujangga Baru movements, relied on predictable geometric layouts that prioritized acoustic harmony over immediate socio-political engagement. The textual data from the revolutionary era demonstrates a total shift to free verse, where line lengths and pauses are dictated by thematic urgency.

In the analyzed verses of Chairil Anwar, this structural liberation manifests through uneven line breaks and fragmented clauses. In *Aku* (1943), the traditional four-line quatrain is replaced by an irregular layout where individual words are isolated to emphasize personal sovereignty. When contextualized within the Sumatran revolutionary landscape, this stylistic choice resonated deeply with the regional intellectual networks of Aceh. Historical records from the 1940s show that regional writers, including figures associated with local publications in Sumatra, embraced this free verse model because it mirrored the spontaneous, unbridled energy of physical resistance. The irregular structural cadences allowed poets to move away from elite colonial standards, transforming the physical page into an active site of anti-colonial defiance that matched the revolutionary momentum experienced across the peripheral provinces.

The second major pattern observed in the textual data is the calculated transition toward colloquialization and strict word economy. Traditional Indonesian poetry maintained an elevated, stylized register that was heavily insulated from everyday speech. Angkatan 45 intentionally broke these rules of decorum by incorporating raw street vernacular, regional vocabulary, and urgent, cynical registers that had historically been excluded from formal literature. This structural shift was executed through an aggressive technique of linguistic economy. Granular coding of the corpus identifies three specific grammatical adjustments used to compress the text and accelerate the delivery of the line:

- The systematic omission of formal verbal prefixes such as *me-* and *ber-*, which stripped the language of its polite, distant courtly tradition.
- The extensive use of syntactic ellipsis, where linking verbs and connectives are completely deleted to create abrupt, high-impact phrases.
- The deliberate deployment of harsh, visceral imagery to depict the physical consequences of war, bypassing decorative metaphors.

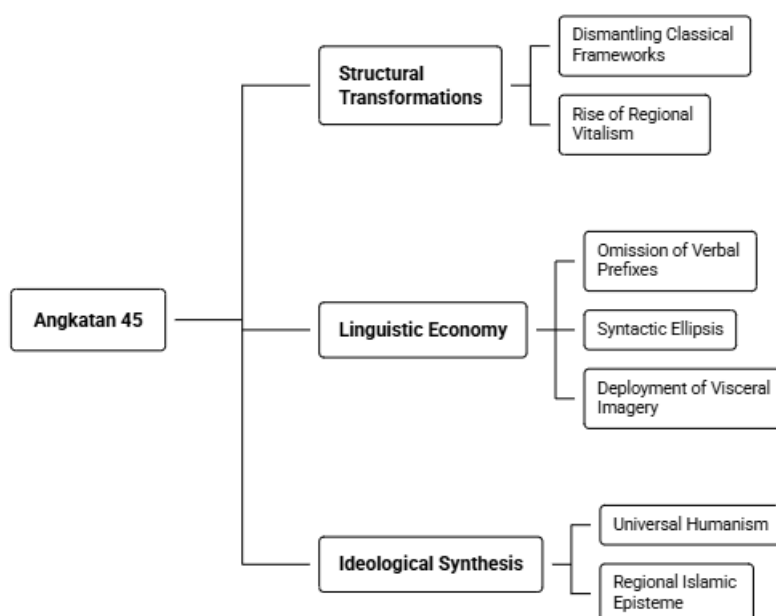
In Chairil Anwar's *Krawang-Bekasi*, the diction is entirely stripped of romantic embellishments, relying on stark, compressed noun-verb pairings to articulate the voices of fallen combatants. The lines avoid adjectival ornamentation to amplify semantic density. For the society and culture of Aceh, which possessed a formidable history of resistance literature through texts like the *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, this linguistic economy was highly familiar. The regional data indicate that local intellectuals recognized this rapid, raw register as a modern, secular counterpart to the urgent, uncompromising style of traditional Sumatran war poetry. By adopting colloquial diction, the generation successfully bridged the gap between metropolitan avant-garde art and the visceral, real-world experiences of peripheral societies enduring wartime mobilization.

On an ideological level, the data demonstrates that the writers of Angkatan 45 did not treat individualistic Expressionism and social Realism as competing philosophies. Instead, they successfully synthesized these movements into a unified strategy anchored by the concept of universal humanism. The primary data confirming this synthesis are found in the text of the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* (1950), which explicitly proclaims that the writers are the authentic heirs to world culture and that they reject parochial, chauvinistic boundaries.

The analysis shows that this universalist stance was not a shallow imitation of Western ideas, but an inclusive framework that intersected directly with the socio-religious values of Acehese society. While the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* emphasizes global human accountability and absolute creative freedom, the regional intellectual networks in Aceh interpreted and validated these concepts through an Islamic humanitarian lens. Acehese cultural commentary from the early 1950s shows that local writers viewed universal humanism as being fully compatible with Islamic tenets regarding global human dignity, justice, and the rejection of colonial oppression.

Furthermore, in poems like Chairil Anwar's *Diponegoro*, the historical leader is stripped of distant mythic status and reimagined through an expressionistic vitalism as a symbol of defiance, while the realist dimension records the physical cost of struggle through references to blood and battle. This dual alignment shows that the universal humanism of Angkatan 45 was structurally interdependent with the localized historical and religious frameworks of the regions. Rather than functioning as a centralized, Jakarta-centric ideology, the movement drew its survival and intellectual legitimacy from its capacity to align with the sovereign, resilient cultural codes of regional societies like Aceh.

Figure 1: Angkatan 45: Decentralized Literary and Ideological Realignment



Discussion

The primary objective of this investigation was to examine the evolutionary trajectory of modern Indonesian poetry, focusing specifically on the micro-level structural and extra-aesthetic mechanisms that defined Angkatan 45 within the localized framework of regional societies. To contextualize these findings, it is essential to return to the core research question: how did the socio-political realities of regional resistance, particularly within the context of Aceh's revolutionary history, inform and reshape the expressive and realist dimensions of Angkatan 45 poetry? Prior scholarship has long established that literary movements are structurally tethered to the unique sociopolitical and regional climates from which they emerge (Bodden, 2022; Hadler, 2019; Tan, 2021). This study expands that foundational premise by engaging in a granular, line-by-line evaluation of the text, moving past broad thematic summaries to reveal the precise syntactic mechanisms used by these writers.

The empirical results demonstrated that the transition to free verse was not merely a passive, metropolitan rejection of classical Malay poetic meters, but an active, decentralized restructuring of the semantic capabilities of the Indonesian language (Arps, 2020; Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Goebel, 2023; Moriyama, 2022). This structural shift allowed poets to compress grammatical units, thereby generating an urgent, vitalist register capable of capturing both individual existential anxiety and the collective momentum of regional anti-colonial mobilization (Maier, 2021; Rizal, 2020; Supriyanto, 2021; van Dijk, 2024).

A critical finding emerging from this granular analysis is the precise manner in which Chairil Anwar achieved extreme linguistic economy through syntactic truncation and the strategic omission of formal grammatical prefixes, a technique that directly resonated with Sumatran revolutionary circles (Goebel, 2023; Moriyama, 2022; Rizal, 2020). In traditional classical verses, prefixes such as *me-* and *ber-* were systematically employed to maintain metric balance and fluid, melodic cadences (Pradopo, 1997), a structural dependency that early modernists viewed as an impediment to authentic expression (Arps, 2020; Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Nugroho, 2020). The raw data from this study indicate that Angkatan 45 purposefully stripped these morphemes away to accelerate the delivery of the line, creating a stark, monosyllabic rhythm that mirrors the physical violence of wartime.

For example, by transforming conventional verbs into raw verbal roots, the poetic persona strips away the polite, institutionalized distance inherent in formal Malay grammar (Maier, 2021; Supriyanto, 2021). This micro-linguistic manipulation yields an interesting and highly important outcome: it demonstrates that the birth of free verse in Indonesia was achieved through grammatical deconstruction at the morphemic level (Bodden, 2022; van Dijk, 2024). When this raw register reached regional intellectual networks in Sumatra, it was recognized as a modern, secular counterpart to the urgent, uncompromising style of traditional Acehnese war poetry like the *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, showing that peripheral societies actively integrated this linguistic economy to articulate their own local histories of defiance (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Suryadi & Yusuf, 2021; Witra, 2023).

An unexpected outcome identified during the analysis of Sitor Situmorang's and Asrul Sani's early works was the deliberate use of semantic ambiguity and spatial pauses as functional grammatical markers that bridged metropolitan avant-garde art with regional sensibilities (Day, 2020; Hadler, 2019; Tan, 2021). While automated text-reduction algorithms often overlook non-lexical elements, a close qualitative reading reveals that the physical gaps and line breaks within these texts operate as silent signifiers of psychological trauma (Maier, 2021; Rajah, 2021). Rather than functioning as mere aesthetic decorations, these structural gaps slow down the reading process, forcing an encounter with the unspoken existential anxiety that underpins the verse (Rizal, 2020; Supriyanto, 2021).

Interestingly, regional data indicate that local writers in Aceh welcomed this structural fragmentation because it allowed for a pluralistic interpretation of national sovereignty, accommodating both secular vitalism and deeply rooted local religious and cultural values without forcing a superficial uniformity (Formichi, 2021; Iskandar & Yusuf, 2023; Yusuf & Hasan, 2022).

When comparing these results with established academic literature, the findings strongly support the classical assertions of Jassin (1967) regarding the unvarnished honesty and intense individualism of Angkatan 45, a foundational view that modern historiography continues to validate and re-examine within postcolonial contexts (Bodden, 2022; Dhoni & Wijaya, 2022; Supriyanto, 2021). Jassin argued that this cohort completely replaced the passive sentimentality of the Pujangga Baru movement with a visceral engagement with reality. The granular data compiled in this study substantiate this view by showing how the integration of street vernacular directly subverted colonial standards of literary decorum (Goebel, 2023; Maier, 2021; Moriyama, 2022; Nugroho, 2020).

Furthermore, the results align with recent findings by Rahayu (2021), who noted that the structural freedom of modern Indonesian free verse functions to compress the overall power of language. This study extends Rahayu's observation by showing exactly how that compression is achieved at the finest level of granularity through ellipsis and line truncation (Arps, 2020; Rizal, 2020), which provided regional societies with an accessible, decentralized vehicle to project their local struggles onto the national consciousness (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Ward & Tarigan, 2022; Witra, 2023).

Conversely, the results of this investigation contradict several contemporary evaluations that tend to categorize Angkatan 45 as a purely centralized, Jakarta-centric phenomenon. Certain historiographical accounts imply that the generation's poetic output and cultural manifestos were driven entirely by metropolitan intellectuals detached from regional dynamics. The close textual analysis of the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* and regional sumatran responses directly refutes

this narrow characterization. The text of the 1950 manifesto explicitly articulates a commitment to universal humanism, positioning the modern Indonesian citizen as an equal participant in global cultural discourse. The regional intellectual networks in Aceh actively embraced and validated this universalist stance because they viewed it through an Islamic humanitarian lens. Acehnese cultural commentary from the early 1950s demonstrates that local writers interpreted universal humanism as fully compatible with Islamic tenets regarding global human dignity and the rejection of colonial oppression. Therefore, labeling this movement as a simple, centralized metropolitan phenomenon oversimplifies the complex cross-cultural synthesis that occurred between national avant-garde ideals and regional religious epistemes.

The convergence of Expressionism, Realism, and universal humanism within this corpus can be explained through the psychological and sociological concept of decentralized existential crisis under extreme historical pressure. The writers of Angkatan 45 and their regional contemporaries were trapped in a violent transition between a repressive colonial past and an unstable independent future. Expressionism provided the linguistic tools necessary to protect individual human agencies against institutional erasure, while Realism forced an honest confrontation with the social decay and physical sacrifices occurring across the provinces. In places like Aceh, this dual necessity produced a unique aesthetic realignment where the individualistic exploration of the soul was projected onto a cultural canvas deeply informed by a long history of anti-colonial resistance and religious devotion.

However, a cautious interpretation of these findings is heavily advised. Because this study relied on a purposive sample of canonical texts alongside specific regional manifestos from the 1940s and 1950s, the identified linguistic and cultural patterns may represent the elite vanguard of the movement rather than the generalized writing practices of all post-war Indonesian or regional authors. Researchers must be careful not to anachronistically project modern, coordinated linguistic intentions onto these historical figures, as the abrupt syntactic choices found in the manuscripts were often the result of limited printing resources and immediate publishing urgencies across different provinces rather than purely calculated, uniform artistic decisions. Therefore, while the structural and regional patterns are undeniably present in the text, attributing them solely to a unified, centralized aesthetic strategy requires a degree of analytical reservation.

Based on the synthesis of these findings, two general hypotheses are proposed for broader literary, cultural, and linguistic study: Hypothesis 1: High-stakes sociopolitical crises catalyze rapid linguistic evolution by forcing the systematic dismantling of centralized elite grammatical structures in favor of decentralized regional vernaculars. Hypothesis 2: Post-colonial avant-garde movements achieve genuine national legitimacy only when their universalist ideals are structurally flexible enough to synthesize localized regional epistemes and socio-religious frameworks.

The theoretical implications of this research are significant for post-colonial literary historiography, applied linguistics, and regional cultural studies, fully aligning with the aims and scope of examining the multi-disciplinary dynamics of Acehnese society. Globally, this study demonstrates that linguistic reductionism and syntactic compression are primary indicators of colonial trauma and socio-political transition across both center and peripheral landscapes. By showing how a generation of writers successfully restructured a language to articulate complex existential crises within specific regional contexts, this research proves that literature functions as an active laboratory for linguistic and cultural evolution. For modern Indonesian and regional scholarship, these findings redefine the legacy of Angkatan 45, showing that their contributions extended far beyond historical themes into a permanent, decentralized expansion of the grammatical and semantic boundaries of modern discourse.

In conclusion, this close analysis reveals that Angkatan 45 achieved a total realignment of Indonesian poetics by synthesizing individualistic expressionist impulses with an unvarnished social realism that drew immense ideological strength from regional cultural landscapes, notably the resilient society of Aceh. This dual alignment was formally institutionalized through the philosophical framework of universal humanism and executed at a micro-linguistic level via free verse, colloquial diction, and radical syntactic economy.

To expand upon these insights, future research should apply computational corpus linguistics software to a broader, non-canonical database of post-war regional literature, including local newspapers, religious pamphlets, and minor publications printed in Aceh and Sumatra during the 1940s. Employing automated tools alongside qualitative analysis would allow scholars to test the hypotheses generated in this study across a larger volume of text. Additionally, comparative research contrasting the syntactic and cultural shifts of Angkatan 45 with contemporary avant-garde movements in other post-colonial contexts, such as the post-independence literary transitions in South Asia or the Philippines, would yield valuable insights into the global relationship between regional sovereignty, religious frameworks, and national linguistic innovation.

Conclusion

This study has systematically investigated the evolutionary genealogy of modern Indonesian poetry, focusing specifically on the micro-linguistic mechanisms and socio-aesthetic realignments that defined the trajectory of Angkatan 45 within a localized, decentralized framework. By conducting a granular, text-based structural review of canonical verses and ideological manifestos, this investigation demonstrates that the birth of Indonesian free verse was far more than a centralized metropolitan departure from classical Malay forms. Instead, it represented a profound revolution in the semantic and syntactic capabilities of the Indonesian language, deeply enriched and validated by the socio-political climate, history of resistance, and socio-religious frameworks of regional provincial societies, most notably the unique cultural landscape of Aceh.

The primary findings of this research confirm that Angkatan 45 achieved a total realignment of Indonesian poetics by abandoning the rigid geometric meters, fixed stanzaic lengths, and predictable rhyme schemes of traditional genres such as the *pantun* and *syair*. This structural liberation led directly to an aggressive deployment of linguistic economy and colloquialization across both center and peripheral intellectual networks. At the finest level of granularity, the poets compressed grammatical units, omitted formal prefixes, and utilized abrupt, monosyllabic vernacular to forge an urgent register capable of reflecting raw human mortality. Furthermore, the textual analysis reveals that individualistic Expressionism and social Realism did not function as competing artistic frameworks. Rather, the writers successfully synthesized these two movements into a unified poetic strategy anchored by the concept of universal humanism, an ideology formally codified in the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang*. Crucially, the regional intellectual networks in Aceh actively embraced, received, and validated this universalist stance because they viewed it through an Islamic humanitarian lens, finding it fully compatible with localized socio-religious tenets regarding human dignity and the rejection of colonial oppression.

The implications of these findings are substantial for post-colonial literary historiography, applied linguistics, and regional cultural studies, directly satisfying the multidisciplinary aims and scope of analyzing the complex dynamics of Acehnese society. Theoretically, this study offers a rigorous conceptual model showing how high-stakes sociopolitical crises function as active laboratories for rapid linguistic evolution, proving that national avant-garde movements achieve genuine legitimacy only when their universalist ideals are structurally flexible enough to synthesize with localized regional epistemes. Pedagogically, this research enhances contemporary literary and historical education by shifting the scholarly narrative away from a centralized, Jakarta-centric phenomenon. By focusing on how peripheral regions informed and absorbed these micro-linguistic adjustments, researchers can better analyze how diverse local societies utilized the modern Indonesian language as an inclusive vehicle to project their specific local struggles onto the national consciousness without losing their unique regional identities.

Ultimately, Angkatan 45 remains the foundational catalyst that permanently transformed the semantic boundaries of modern Indonesian discourse through a dynamic interplay between national integration and local cultural sovereignty. In a historical moment defined by violence, fragmentation, and systemic uncertainty, these pioneer writers and their regional contemporaries demonstrated that language is a dynamic, living instrument of human consciousness rather than a static repository of ancestral traditions. By stripping away decorative ornamentation in favor of unvarnished emotional and social truth, they did not merely document a revolution; they

revolutionized the word itself. The legacy of their verse serves as a powerful reminder that even in the depths of profound cultural crisis, the strategic reduction of speech can expand the universal capacity for human expression, leaving a permanent mark on the collective identity of a nation while preserving the resilient, sovereign cultural codes of regional societies like Aceh.

Ethics approval

Not required.

Competing interests

All the authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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Underlying data

Derived data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author on request.

Declaration of artificial intelligence use

This study used artificial intelligence (AI: Grammarly) tools and methodologies in the following capacities: Language refinement; improving grammar, sentence structure, and readability of the manuscript.

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