



# Stylistic Construction of Nationalism and Colonial Resistance in Chairil Anwar's Poetry

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## Abstract

Literary works produced during colonial periods often function as sites where language, ideology, and resistance intersect. In Indonesian literary history, the poetry of Chairil Anwar occupies a central position in articulating nationalist consciousness during the late colonial era. While existing scholarship has extensively discussed the thematic dimensions of Anwar's poetry, comparatively limited attention has been given to how linguistic form itself contributes to the construction of resistance and nationalism. Addressing this gap, the present study aims to examine how stylistic features in Chairil Anwar's patriotic poetry linguistically represent colonial resistance and national identity. The study adopts a qualitative stylistic research design. Data consists of selected patriotic poems by Chairil Anwar sourced from authoritative published collections. Using a stylistic framework informed by established models in literary linguistics, the analysis focuses on lexical choice, figurative language, and syntactic structure. Data were analyzed through systematic identification, close interpretation, and contextualization of linguistically salient features within the sociohistorical context of colonial Indonesia. The findings reveal that nationalism and resistance are constructed through dense resistance-oriented lexicon, symbolic imagery grounded in collective experience, and syntactic patterns emphasizing agency, urgency, and unity. These stylistic strategies work cohesively to embed ideological meaning within poetic form rather than presenting it explicitly. The study demonstrates that language functions as an active ideological resource in Anwar's poetry. This research contributes to Indonesian literary studies by providing a linguistically grounded analysis of nationalist poetry and highlights the value of stylistics for examining non-Anglophone literary traditions within postcolonial scholarship.

**Keywords:** Stylistics, Nationalism, Colonial Resistance, Indonesian Poetry, Chairil Anwar

## Introduction

Literary texts produced under colonial domination have long been recognized as crucial sites where language, ideology, and resistance intersect. In colonized societies, literature does not merely function as an aesthetic form but often serves as a symbolic arena for negotiating identity, power, and collective memory. Postcolonial literary scholarship has repeatedly demonstrated that poetic language can operate as an instrument of ideological articulation, enabling writers to challenge colonial authority while simultaneously constructing alternative narratives of nationhood and selfhood (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2002; Said, 1993). Within this broader framework, poetry has proven particularly significant because of its capacity to condense political meaning into intensified linguistic forms that appeal to emotion, imagination, and shared cultural experience.



In the Indonesian context, literary production during the late colonial period played a pivotal role in shaping nationalist consciousness. The rise of modern Indonesian literature in the early twentieth century coincided with intensifying resistance against Dutch colonial rule and with the emergence of new linguistic and cultural identities articulated through Bahasa Indonesia. Scholars have emphasized that the adoption of Indonesian as a literary language was in itself a political act, contributing to the construction of a unified national identity across diverse ethnic and linguistic communities (Foulcher, 2000; Teeuw, 1980). Poetry written during this period frequently reflected struggles over freedom, autonomy, and national belonging, while also experimenting with innovative linguistic forms that departed from traditional genres.

Among the most influential figures of this literary transformation is Chairil Anwar, a central representative of the Angkatan 45 movement. Chairil Anwar is widely regarded as a pioneer of modern Indonesian poetry, known for his radical departure from conventional poetic forms and his intense focus on individuality, freedom, and resistance (Teeuw, 1989). His poems are often characterized by condensed diction, striking imagery, and emotional urgency, features that resonate strongly with the sociohistorical conditions of colonial oppression and political upheaval. As numerous scholars have noted, Anwar's poetic language reflects both a personal struggle for autonomy and a collective yearning for national liberation (Foulcher, 1990; Johns, 1964).

Existing research on Chairil Anwar has predominantly concentrated on thematic interpretation, biographical readings, and historical contextualization. Studies have explored themes such as existentialism, death, freedom, and nationalism in his poetry, frequently situating these concerns within the intellectual climate of the 1940s and the influence of Western modernism (Teeuw, 1989; Aveling, 1979). While such approaches have yielded valuable insights, they often treat language as a transparent medium through which meaning is conveyed, rather than as an active structuring force that shapes ideological effects. Consequently, the specific linguistic mechanisms through which nationalist and resistance-oriented meanings are constructed have received relatively limited systematic attention.

Stylistics, as an approach that bridges literary studies and linguistics, offers a powerful analytical framework for addressing this limitation. Stylistic analysis focuses on how linguistic choices at levels such as lexis, syntax, and figurative language contribute to meaning and interpretation in literary texts (Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004). Rather than viewing literary language as a purely ornamental deviation from norm, stylistics conceptualizes it as a motivated selection of linguistic resources that foreground particular ideological and emotional effects. In the context of colonial and postcolonial literature, stylistics has been increasingly employed to uncover how power relations, resistance, and identity are embedded in textual form (Carter & Stockwell, 2008; Toolan, 1998).

Within postcolonial literary studies, scholars have emphasized the importance of examining linguistic form alongside thematic content. Ashcroft et al. (2002) argue that language itself becomes a site of struggle in postcolonial texts, where writers strategically manipulate linguistic norms to assert agency and resist colonial authority. Similarly, Fairclough (1995) highlights that ideological meanings are not merely reflected in texts but are actively produced through specific linguistic patterns. From this perspective, a stylistic examination of Chairil Anwar's poetry allows for a more precise understanding of how nationalist ideology is linguistically constructed rather than simply thematically asserted.

Despite the recognized value of stylistic approaches, relatively few studies have applied systematic stylistic analysis to Indonesian colonial-era poetry, particularly with respect to the representation of resistance and patriotism. Existing research on Indonesian literature has tended to prioritize historical, sociological, or cultural readings, often leaving linguistic analysis underdeveloped (Foulcher, 2000). When stylistic features are discussed, they are frequently addressed in an impressionistic manner without a clear analytical framework. This gap is especially evident in discussions of Chairil Anwar's patriotic poems, which are frequently cited for their emotional power but seldom analyzed in terms of the specific linguistic strategies that generate this effect.

Furthermore, international scholarship on stylistics has largely focused on English-language literary traditions, with comparatively limited attention to non-Western literatures. As noted by

Simpson (2004), expanding stylistic analysis to diverse linguistic and cultural contexts is essential for developing the field beyond its Eurocentric foundations. Indonesian poetry, with its unique linguistic history and colonial background, presents a particularly valuable case for such expansion. A stylistic investigation of Chairil Anwar's poetry therefore has the potential not only to deepen understanding of Indonesian literary modernism but also to contribute to broader discussions on how language functions as a medium of resistance in colonial and postcolonial settings.

Another limitation of previous scholarship lies in the tendency to treat nationalism as a static thematic category rather than a dynamically constructed discourse. Contemporary discourse-oriented approaches emphasize that nationalism is produced through repeated linguistic patterns that evoke shared emotions, values, and memories (Wodak et al., 2009). From this perspective, nationalist sentiment in poetry emerges through specific lexical choices, metaphors, and syntactic arrangements that invite readers to align emotionally and ideologically with the text. Applying such insights to Chairil Anwar's poetry enables a more nuanced understanding of how linguistic form mobilizes affective responses associated with struggle and sacrifice.

This study addresses these gaps by conducting a stylistic analysis of selected patriotic poems by Chairil Anwar, focusing on how colonial resistance and nationalism are linguistically constructed. Drawing primarily on the stylistic framework proposed by Leech and Short (2007), the analysis examines lexical selection, figurative language, and syntactic patterns that contribute to the representation of struggle and collective identity. By situating these linguistic features within the sociohistorical context of colonial Indonesia, the study demonstrates how stylistic choices function as ideological strategies rather than mere aesthetic devices.

The main objective of this research is to elucidate the role of language in shaping nationalist meaning in Chairil Anwar's poetry. Specifically, it aims to identify the dominant stylistic features employed in his patriotic poems and to explain how these features contribute to constructing a discourse of resistance against colonial domination. In doing so, the study moves beyond thematic description to provide a linguistically grounded account of how poetic language operates as a form of ideological expression.

The contribution of this study is threefold. First, it advances scholarship on Chairil Anwar by offering a systematic stylistic analysis that complements existing thematic and historical approaches. Second, it enriches Indonesian literary studies by demonstrating the analytical value of stylistics for examining colonial-era texts. Third, it contributes to international stylistic and postcolonial research by foregrounding a non-Western literary tradition and illustrating how linguistic form mediates ideological meaning in contexts of colonial resistance. Through this interdisciplinary engagement, the study reinforces the relevance of stylistics as a methodological bridge between linguistics and literary studies and underscores the central role of language in the cultural politics of nation formation.

## Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design grounded in stylistic analysis to investigate how linguistic features construct meanings of nationalism and colonial resistance in the poetry of Chairil Anwar. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the research focuses on interpretive analysis of language use rather than on numerical measurement or statistical generalization. Stylistics is adopted as the primary analytical orientation because it enables systematic examination of how formal linguistic choices interact with literary meaning and ideological expression. By integrating linguistic analysis with literary interpretation, this design allows the study to explore poetic language as a structured and purposeful system rather than as an intuitive or purely aesthetic phenomenon.

The study is exploratory and interpretative in nature. It aims to generate theoretically informed insights into the relationship between language, ideology, and historical context within literary texts. Such a design is consistent with established methodological practices in stylistics and literary linguistics, where close reading is supported by explicit analytical categories.

The primary data consist of selected patriotic poems written by Chairil Anwar during the late colonial period in Indonesia. The poems were sourced from authoritative and widely cited published collections of Chairil Anwar's works to ensure textual reliability. These poems were

chosen because they explicitly engage with themes of struggle, resistance, sacrifice, and national consciousness, which are central to the objectives of the study.

Secondary data include scholarly literature on stylistics, Indonesian literary history, postcolonial theory, and nationalism. These sources serve to contextualize the analysis, support theoretical claims, and situate the findings within existing academic debates.

Data collection was conducted through purposive sampling. Poems were selected based on three main criteria. First, the poems had to be composed within the historical context of colonial domination. Second, they needed to demonstrate thematic relevance to nationalism or resistance. Third, the texts had to exhibit linguistic richness suitable for stylistic analysis, such as marked lexical choices, figurative expressions, or distinctive syntactic patterns.

Once the poems were selected, the texts were carefully transcribed from published editions to avoid textual inaccuracies. The corpus was then compiled into a single analytical dataset to facilitate systematic examination.

In qualitative stylistic research, the primary research instrument is the researcher, who functions as an informed and theoretically grounded interpreter of textual data. To guide analysis and maintain methodological consistency, this study employs a stylistic analytical framework adapted from established models in stylistics. The framework functions as an analytical instrument that directs attention to specific linguistic features rather than relying on impressionistic reading.

The analytical categories include lexical choice, figurative language, and syntactic structure. Lexical analysis focuses on word selection, semantic fields, and evaluative vocabulary related to struggle and nationalism. Figurative analysis examines metaphors, symbolism, and imagery that contribute to ideological meaning. Syntactic analysis considers sentence patterns, clause structure, and grammatical emphasis that shape intensity, agency, and perspective.

The data collection procedure followed several stages. First, all selected poems were read repeatedly to develop familiarity with their thematic and emotional dimensions. Second, analytic reading was conducted to identify stylistically salient linguistic features based on the predefined analytical categories. During this stage, relevant words, phrases, and clauses were marked and classified according to their stylistic function.

Coding was conducted manually to preserve sensitivity to contextual nuance and poetic ambiguity. Analytical notes were written throughout the process to record observations and preliminary interpretations. This iterative procedure allowed emerging patterns to be refined and reassessed as analysis progressed.

Measurement in this study is qualitative and interpretative rather than numerical. Linguistic features are evaluated based on their functional contribution to meaning construction. Lexical items are assessed in terms of semantic intensity, emotional resonance, and ideological implication. Figurative expressions are examined for their symbolic significance within the colonial and nationalist context. Syntactic structures are analyzed in relation to emphasis, rhythm, and representation of agency.

Consistency in measurement is ensured by applying the same analytical criteria across all texts in the dataset. This approach strengthens analytical rigor and reduces interpretive arbitrariness.

Data analysis proceeds through three interconnected stages. The first stage involves identification, in which stylistically significant linguistic features are systematically identified within each poem. The second stage involves interpretation, where these features are analyzed in relation to their semantic, aesthetic, and ideological functions. At this stage, linguistic patterns are linked to broader concepts such as resistance, collective identity, and national consciousness.

The third stage involves contextualization. The stylistic findings are interpreted in relation to the sociohistorical conditions of colonial Indonesia and situated within existing scholarship on Chairil Anwar, stylistics, and postcolonial literature. This stage ensures that the analysis moves beyond textual description toward theoretical contribution.

Throughout the analytical process, reflexive evaluation was employed to ensure coherence between linguistic evidence and interpretive claims. Interpretations were continuously cross referenced with stylistic theory and literary scholarship to enhance analytical credibility and methodological transparency.

## Findings

This section presents the findings of the stylistic analysis of selected patriotic poems by Chairil Anwar. The results are organized thematically based on recurring linguistic patterns identified across the texts. The analysis focuses on lexical choice, figurative language, and syntactic structures that collectively construct meanings of resistance, struggle, and national consciousness. The findings are presented descriptively and analytically, supported by textual evidence drawn directly from the poems (Figure 1).

One of the most prominent stylistic features observed in Chairil Anwar's patriotic poetry is the use of lexicon associated with struggle, endurance, and confrontation. Across the analyzed poems, lexical items related to physical action and sacrifice appear with high frequency. Words such as *berjuang* (to struggle), *darah* (blood), *mati* (death), *lawan* (resist), and *merdeka* (freedom) are repeatedly foregrounded, forming a coherent semantic field of resistance.

For instance, in the line "Dengan semangat, berjuang tanpa henti," the verb *berjuang* is intensified by the adverbial phrase *tanpa henti* (without cease), linguistically reinforcing the idea of persistence and unwavering commitment. The absence of mitigating modifiers or hedging expressions gives the line a direct and forceful tone. This pattern is consistent across the poems, where lexical choices favor definiteness and intensity rather than ambiguity.

Such lexical density contributes to what stylisticians describe as foregrounding, where particular words are made salient through repetition or semantic prominence (Leech & Short, 2007). In this case, foregrounded resistance-related vocabulary functions ideologically by constructing struggle as a collective and inevitable condition rather than a personal or isolated experience. The findings suggest that nationalism in these poems is not conveyed abstractly but is embedded in concrete lexical selections that evoke shared hardship and determination.

The analysis also reveals extensive use of figurative language to symbolize national identity and collective memory. Metaphors and symbolic expressions are employed not merely for aesthetic embellishment but to anchor abstract concepts such as *الوطن* (the homeland) and freedom in tangible imagery.

In the line "Di tanah air, pahlawan berdiri," the phrase *tanah air* (homeland) operates metonymically to represent the nation. The verb *berdiri* (to stand) metaphorically conveys readiness, resilience, and moral uprightness. The image of standing suggests both physical presence and ideological steadfastness, thereby transforming the homeland into a living space of resistance rather than a passive geographical entity.

Another recurrent symbolic pattern involves references to nature and endurance. Expressions such as *badai* (storm) in "Dengan keberanian, menghadapi badai" frame colonial oppression as a natural yet violent force. Positioning resistance as an act of facing a storm linguistically elevates the struggle from historical contingency to an almost universal human confrontation with adversity. This metaphorical strategy aligns with observations in postcolonial stylistics that figurative language often functions to universalize local resistance narratives (Ashcroft et al., 2002).

The findings indicate that figurative language consistently operates to bridge individual experience and collective ideology. Rather than presenting nationalism as an abstract political doctrine, the poems translate it into shared sensory and emotional images that invite reader identification.

Syntactic analysis demonstrates that the poems frequently employ simple, declarative sentence structures with minimal subordination. This structural simplicity contributes to clarity, urgency, and rhetorical force. Many lines are constructed using parataxis, where clauses are placed side by side without explicit logical connectors, as illustrated in the sequence "Bersatu hati, tumpah ruah bakti."

The omission of conjunctions allows meaning to emerge through juxtaposition, requiring readers to infer relationships between unity and sacrifice. This syntactic economy intensifies interpretive engagement while maintaining rhythmic momentum. According to Simpson (2004), such syntactic foregrounding is characteristic of texts that seek to produce immediacy and emotional impact.

Agency is also linguistically foregrounded through the use of active voice and explicit subjects. References to *pahlawan* (heroes) and *serdadu* (soldiers) frequently occur in subject

position, emphasizing human action rather than abstract processes. For example, in “Pahlawan bangsa, jasa tiada terpadam,” the noun pahlawan occupies the thematic position of the clause, highlighting actors rather than outcomes.

This syntactic emphasis aligns with nationalist discourse that prioritizes human agency and moral responsibility. The findings suggest that the grammatical organization of clauses actively participates in constructing resistance as a deliberate and collective act rather than a passive historical occurrence.

Another salient finding concerns the use of repetition to reinforce ideological meaning. Recurrent references to struggle, unity, and victory function as rhythmic and semantic anchors within the poems. Repetition occurs both lexically and structurally, contributing to a chant-like quality that echoes oral and performative traditions associated with collective mobilization.

For example, repeated references to negeri tercinta (beloved nation) across stanzas reinforce emotional attachment to the nation. This repetition does not merely restate meaning but gradually accumulates affective intensity, shaping reader alignment with the ideological stance of the text. Wodak et al. (2009) argue that repetition is a key discursive strategy in the construction of national identity, as it naturalizes ideological concepts through familiarity.

The findings indicate that rhythmic repetition in Chairil Anwar’s patriotic poetry functions as a persuasive device. It stabilizes key ideological concepts while enhancing memorability and emotional resonance. Taken together, the findings demonstrate that resistance and nationalism in Chairil Anwar’s poetry are constructed through a systematic interplay of lexical intensity, figurative symbolism, syntactic emphasis, and repetition. These linguistic strategies work cohesively to transform poetic language into a medium of ideological expression. Rather than relying on explicit political argumentation, the poems embed nationalist meaning within their linguistic structure, allowing resistance to emerge organically through form as well as content. This stylistic pattern underscores the role of language as an active agent in shaping literary representations of colonial struggle.

Figure 1: Stylistic Analysis of Chairil Anwar's Patriotic Poems

Characteristic	Lexical Choice	Figurative Language	Syntactic Structures	Repetition
Description	Words associated with struggle, endurance, confrontation	Metaphors, symbolic expressions for national identity	Simple, declarative sentences, parataxis	Recurrent references to struggle, unity, victory
Example	berjuang tanpa henti* (struggle without cease)	Di tanah air, pahlawan berdiri* (In the homeland, heroes stand)	Bersatu hati, tumpah ruah bakti* (United hearts, overflowing devotion)	negeri tercinta* (beloved nation)
Function	Constructs struggle as collective, inevitable	Bridges individual experience and collective ideology	Contributes to clarity, urgency, rhetorical force	Reinforces ideological meaning, persuasive device

## Discussion

This discussion interprets the findings of the stylistic analysis in relation to research questions and situates them within relevant scholarly debates on stylistics, postcolonial literature, and nationalism. By engaging closely with linguistic data at a fine level of detail, this section seeks to demonstrate how Chairil Anwar’s patriotic poetry constructs meanings of resistance and national consciousness through specific and recurring language choices.

This study set out to examine how linguistic and stylistic features in Chairil Anwar’s patriotic poetry represent colonial resistance and nationalism. The findings clearly indicate that stylistic elements are central to meaning construction. Lexical choice, figurative language, and syntactic structure do not merely decorate the poems but function as discursive mechanisms through which ideological positions are articulated. This result directly addresses the core research question concerning how nationalist sentiment is linguistically realized rather than simply thematically stated.

The prominence of resistance-oriented lexicon supports earlier observations that colonial-era literature frequently foregrounds action, sacrifice, and endurance as ideological values (Said, 1993; Foulcher, 2000). However, the present analysis extends this understanding by

demonstrating how such values are embedded at the level of word choice rather than conveyed solely through narrative content. The repeated use of verbs denoting struggle and persistence constructs nationalism as an ongoing process rather than a completed historical event. This finding aligns with Leech and Short's (2007) assertion that lexical foregrounding shapes reader interpretation by directing attention to particular semantic fields.

The frequent reliance on figurative language further confirms claims in postcolonial stylistics that metaphor serves as a crucial medium for articulating resistance (Ashcroft et al., 2002). In the analyzed poems, metaphors of standing, storms, and endurance transform colonial oppression into experiential imagery. This strategy enables abstract political concepts to be rendered emotionally accessible. Unlike studies that focus primarily on symbolism as cultural reflection, the present findings show that figurative language actively structures ideological meaning by shaping how struggle is cognitively and emotionally framed.

One unexpected outcome of the analysis is the relative simplicity of syntactic structures despite the complexity of ideological meaning conveyed. While modernist poetry is often associated with syntactic fragmentation and opacity, Chairil Anwar's patriotic poems frequently employ straightforward declarative clauses. This simplicity appears to enhance rhetorical clarity and immediacy rather than reduce aesthetic sophistication. Such a pattern partially contrasts with stylistic studies of Western modernist poetry, which often emphasize syntactic disruption as a marker of resistance (Simpson, 2004).

This finding suggests that resistance in the Indonesian colonial context may rely less on linguistic obscurity and more on directness and urgency. It points to the need for stylistic theories to remain sensitive to cultural and historical variation rather than assuming universal modernist norms.

The results of this study support prior scholarship that identifies Chairil Anwar's poetry as deeply engaged with themes of nationalism and struggle (Teeuw, 1989; Aveling, 1979). However, they differ from earlier thematic analyses by providing linguistic evidence for how these themes are constructed. While previous studies often describe Anwar's work as emotionally intense or revolutionary, the present analysis demonstrates how such effects arise from specific stylistic configurations.

At the same time, the findings challenge approaches that treat nationalism in literary texts as a static or homogeneous concept. By examining repetition and syntactic emphasis, this study shows that nationalist discourse in poetry is dynamically produced through recurring linguistic patterns, which resonates with discourse-oriented approaches to nationalism (Wodak et al., 2009).

The stylistic strategies identified in the poems can be explained by the sociohistorical context in which they were produced. Under colonial conditions marked by censorship and political repression, poetry offered a condensed and powerful mode of expression. Linguistic intensity, repetition, and figurative condensation allowed ideological messages to circulate while retaining symbolic ambiguity. This interpretation aligns with Fairclough's (1995) view that ideological meaning often emerges indirectly through textual form.

Despite the strength of these findings, caution is necessary in interpreting them. The analysis focuses on a limited selection of poems, and the stylistic patterns identified cannot be assumed to represent Chairil Anwar's entire oeuvre without further study. Additionally, while stylistic analysis provides systematic insights into language use, interpretive judgment remains inherent in qualitative research. Different analytical frameworks might foreground alternative aspects of the texts.

The findings suggest a broader hypothesis that in colonial and postcolonial contexts, nationalist ideology in poetry is often realized through intensification rather than abstraction. Linguistic choices that emphasize action, agency, and emotional immediacy may be more effective in mobilizing collective identification than overt political argumentation. This hypothesis may be tested in comparative studies of other colonial literatures beyond Indonesia.

The study underscores the value of stylistics as a methodological bridge between linguistics and literary studies. By demonstrating how close linguistic analysis enriches interpretations of Indonesian literature, the findings contribute to efforts to diversify stylistic research beyond Anglophone traditions. Pedagogically, this approach may also inform the teaching of literature by

encouraging students to engage critically with language rather than treating literary meaning as self-evident.

Future research could expand the corpus to include poems from different phases of Chairil Anwar's career or compare his work with that of other Indonesian poets of the same period. Comparative stylistic studies involving other postcolonial literatures may further illuminate how linguistic strategies of resistance vary across cultural contexts. Incorporating reader response perspectives may also deepen understanding of how stylistic features influence interpretation and emotional engagement.

Overall, this discussion demonstrates that the findings provide strong evidence that language plays an active role in shaping nationalist ideology in Chairil Anwar's patriotic poetry. Through detailed stylistic analysis, the study reveals how resistance is crafted at the microscopic level of linguistic choice, thereby contributing to both Indonesian literary scholarship and broader discussions on the politics of literary language.

## **Conclusion**

This study has examined how linguistic and stylistic choices in Chairil Anwar's patriotic poetry construct meanings of nationalism and colonial resistance. Through a systematic stylistic analysis, the findings demonstrate that resistance in these poems is not expressed solely at the thematic level but is embedded within the fine-grained use of language. Lexical choices foreground struggle, sacrifice, and collective endurance, while figurative language transforms abstract political ideals into concrete and emotionally resonant imagery. Syntactic simplicity and repetition further reinforce urgency, agency, and collective identification, allowing nationalist discourse to emerge through form as much as through content.

Taken together, these findings highlight that the aesthetic and ideological dimensions of Chairil Anwar's poetry are inseparable. Language functions as an active mechanism through which political meaning is shaped and communicated. Rather than presenting nationalism as a fixed or declarative message, the poems construct it dynamically through patterns of emphasis, rhythm, and symbolic association. This supports the view in stylistic and postcolonial scholarship that literary language plays a constitutive role in shaping ideological experience rather than merely reflecting historical circumstances.

The implications of this study are both theoretical and methodological. Theoretically, it contributes to Indonesian literary studies by offering a linguistically grounded account of how colonial resistance is articulated in modern Indonesian poetry. Methodologically, it demonstrates the value of stylistic analysis as a rigorous approach for examining non-Anglophone literary traditions, thereby extending the scope of stylistics beyond its dominant focus on Western literary texts. Pedagogically, the findings also suggest that closer attention to linguistic form can enrich the teaching and interpretation of literary works concerned with nationalism and identity.

Despite these contributions, the study is necessarily limited by its focus on a selected corpus of poems. Future research may extend this analysis to a broader range of texts or undertake comparative studies with other postcolonial literatures to explore cross cultural patterns in the stylistic construction of resistance. Integrating reader response or cognitive stylistic perspectives may also deepen understanding of how such linguistic strategies shape interpretation and emotional engagement.

In conclusion, this study underscores the central role of language in mediating the relationship between poetry, ideology, and history. By revealing how resistance is crafted through precise linguistic choices, it affirms that the enduring power of Chairil Anwar's poetry lies not only in what it represents, but in how it speaks.

### **Ethics approval**

Not required

### **Competing interests**

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

### Underlying data

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

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