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STYLISTIC INNOVATION AND MODERNIST TENDENCIES IN THE POETIC SCHOOL OF RASUL RZA

Метою дослідження є визначення художніх та стилістичних новацій в поетичному стилі Расула Рзи, з особливою увагою до прийняття ним вільного вірша, взаємодії з модерністською естетикою та ширшого літературного значення цих тенденцій в азербайджанській поезії. У дослідженні були застосовані методи стилістичного та порівняльного аналізу вибраних віршів Расула Рзи та ключових представників його літературної школи для визначення жанрових особливостей, лінгвістичних новацій та відхилень від традиційних поетичних форм в азербайджанській літературі. Зосереджуючись на творчості чотирьох центральних постатей – Расула Рзи, Алекбара Салахзаде, Алі Каріма та Раміза Ровшана, дослідження аналізує їхню поетичну творчість, щоб висвітлити трансформацію поетичної форми, мови та тематичних питань, які відрізняли цю школу від традиційної азербайджанської поезії. Представники літературної школи Расула Рзи свідомо відійшли від класичних поетичних жанрів, таких як газель та касида, прийнявши вільний вірш під впливом Європи, який пропонував свободу від фіксованих схем римування та метричних моделей. Це звільнення дозволило поетам досліджувати нові ритмічні структури, інтонації та звукові моделі, що сприяли більш гнучкій та виразній поетичній мові. Дослідження показує, що поезія школи охоплює широкий спектр тем, включаючи міське життя, природу та глибокі філософські роздуми, тим самим розширюючи тематичний діапазон азербайджанської літератури. Стилiстично поети використовували розмовну лексику та різні риторичні прийоми, такі як анафора, епіфора та синтаксичний паралелізм, щоб посилити емоційний резонанс та підсилити музикальність. Примітною особливістю є часте використання коротких, лаконічних та номінативних речень, які надають віршу динамізму та безпосередності, відображаючи швидкий темп та фрагментарну реальність сучасного існування. Дослідження розміщує школу Расула Рзи в ширшому контексті глобального модернізму, демонструючи, як вона синтезувала національні поетичні традиції з міжнародними авангардними тенденціями. Це поєднання сприяло появі унікальної азербайджанської модерністської поетичної ідентичності, яка резонувала з інтелектуальними та естетичними течіями в усьому світі. Результати підкреслюють роль школи у відродженні азербайджанської поезії шляхом руйнування жорстких формальних обмежень, розширення тематичних меж та інтеграції розмовного тону, який зробив поезію більш доступною та соціально значущою. Завдяки цим інноваціям школа Расула Рзи сприяла розвитку інтелектуальної поезії в Азербайджані, яка характеризується філософською глибиною, лінгвістичними експериментами та стилістичною свободою. Результати дослідження показують, що поетична школа Расула Рзи залишається наріжним каменем азербайджанської літературної модернізації, долаючи розрив між національною традицією та світовими літературними інноваціями, а також формуючи майбутні напрямки азербайджанської поезії.

Ключові слова: вільний вірш, інтонація, ритм, метафора, синтаксичний паралелізм, єдність початку.

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Introduction

The research relevance of linguistic and stylistic innovation of the literary school of the poet Rasul Rza (1910-1981) is determined by the significant contribution of this poet and school to the development of modern Azerbaijani literature, as well as their influence on literary processes in the global context. Rasul Rza's ideas aimed at modernising the poetic style, departing from the traditional canon and searching for new forms of artistic expression (*verlibre*) became important guidelines for the next generations of Azerbaijani writers. The work of this poetic school reflects the processes of cultural synthesis, openness to world literary trends and, at the same time, preservation of national identity. Therefore, the linguistic and stylistic innovation of Rasul Rza's literary school requires further research and analysis from the perspective of the present.

The end of the 19th century marked a change in the stylistic direction of poetic discourse in world literature. Authors strived to free poetry from the strict rules of rhyme and metre. Therefore, a new non-metrical verse, the iambic meter, spread in fiction. According to the research of J. Crone [2023], the free verse metric creates an information-rich, multi-level, context-dependent semantic system that is found only in poetic texts. Accordingly, the blank verse was used to express the individual spirit and allowed poets to experiment with structure, rhythm, and content, giving texts greater flexibility and emotional intensity.

The same position regarding the stylistic load of the white verse is voiced in the study by M. Almohawes [2024]: free verse provides poetry with more freedom in expressing thoughts, using specific musical rhythms and including descriptive language, metaphors, etc. Since traditional Azerbaijani poetry is deeply rooted in the classics of the East with its distinct forms, the Azerbaijani literary discourse has faced numerous challenges with the *verlib*. The first attempts to use the *verlib* began in the 20th century, and they belong to the pen of Rasul Rza and the poetic school. However, this verse was considered too free to convey traditional values and forms and contradicted Azerbaijani ghazals and qasids, which are based on strict rules of rhythm and rhyme.

The problem of scientific research in Azerbaijan on the linguistic and stylistic innovation of Rasul Rza's literary school covers several key aspects. The study of the deep transformations of poetic language that resulted from the integration of modernist ideas in Rasul Rza's work was the subject of P. Nuraliyeva's [2022] research. The researcher referred to Rasul Rza as the father of free verse, who brought wide freedom of thought to Azerbaijani literature and allowed lyric poetry to go beyond the formal requirements of the poetic form.

According to a study by S. Pashaeva [2024], Raza, through incisive poems and profound thoughts, revealed the essence of human experience, shed light on the socio-political realities of the time, and delved into timeless themes such as love, freedom, and resistance. Rasul Rza's poetry became a "poetic factor" that triggered the emergence and development of free poetic philosophy and poetics in Azerbaijani cultural discourse. The researcher notes that Rasul Rza's literature is unique in terms of stylistic techniques, metaphors and poetic figures, so the study of literary, genre, ideological, and artistic features of the poet's poetry from the standpoint of new thinking and modern approach will enrich contemporary poetry and literature in general.

S. Shamilova [2024] studied the socio-political influence of society on the literary school. The researcher noted that in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, a movement for freedom of speech and thought, political thought, pluralism, national independence and social justice began in literature, which became the subject of the work of Rasul Rza and the followers.

Many studies are devoted to the influence of the works of the literary school of Rasul Rza on the development of Azerbaijani literature in general in terms of its modernisation and enrichment with a new genre and stylistic forms. D. Jumanov [2024] noted that Rasul Rza's innovative Azerbaijani poetry continues the traditions of Imadeddin Nasimi, Muhammad Fuzuli, Mirza Sabira, and Musa Jalil with an emphasis on subject-formal and ideological and aesthetic features. The results of the study by N. Quliyeva [2021] demonstrated that Rasul Rza's work marked the beginning of the tradition of free poetry in Azerbaijani literature, the transition from rhetorical pathos to concrete, figurative and associative thinking, defining an innovative direction of poetry.

Important trends in the popularisation of the style of Rasul Rza's literary school included an emphasis on the integration of innovative approaches to the literary process and the revelation

of their significance for the development of contemporary Azerbaijani poetry. In particular, the ability to combine the richness of the national poetic tradition with innovative forms of expression, including modernist and symbolist elements. This contributes to the deepening of intercultural dialogue through the work, which often includes universal themes of human experience and social problems. Another important aspect is the adaptation of Rasul Rza's linguistic and stylistic principles in the field of education and literary analysis, which allows preserving the poet's legacy and introducing unique approach to new generations.

The study aimed to determine the artistic and stylistic innovations in the poetic style of the Azerbaijani poet Rasul Rza, focusing on his use of free verse, modernist influences, and the significance of these innovations within the broader context of Azerbaijani literature. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were addressed: to identify the characteristics of the free verse form; to analyse the key stylistic and artistic innovations in Rza's works; to explore the influence of his literary school on Azerbaijani poetry; and to assess the potential for promoting these ideas within both national and international literary contexts.

Materials and Methods

The study of artistic and stylistic means and genre features of the poetic style of the literary school of Rasul Rza was based on the analysis of the poetic works of its representatives and the linguistic and stylistic elements in them. The poems of Rasul Rza *Dalan* [Alley], *Küçəmizin adı* [The Name of Our Street], *Qəmli küçə* [Sad Street], *Mənim küçəm* [My Street], *Mən torpağam* [I Am the Land], *Ruhum Yağış İstəyir* [My Soul Desires Rain], *Tanış qala* [Familiar Fortress], *Yol* [The Road], *Dalğa* [Wave] [Rza, 2005] were analysed. The poems of Alekbar Salahzadeh *Bu dünyanı böldüm* [I Divided This World], *Fəvvarə* [Fountain], *Axşam* [Evening], *Ağlamaq* [Crying] [Adishirin, 2025] were examined. Ali Karim's poems *Ağrıya Bir neçə Söz* [A Few Words About Pain], *Marmotun silahı* [Groundhog Weapon], *Şafa* [Dawn], *Muğami dinləmək* [Listening to Mugham] [Karim, 2004] were interpreted. The poems of Ramiz Rovshan *Bu bahar gecəsində çiçəklər doğular* [Flowers Are Born on This Spring Night], *Taniyir* [He Knows], *Nə hirsə oxuyur bu quş* [Why Does This Bird Sing with Anger], *Gedəcək* [He Will Go] [Rovshan, 2015] were explored.

The principle of selecting poetic texts for analysis was based on several key criteria: authorship, representativeness, and significance. The works of four of the most famous representatives of Rasul Rza's school were selected: Rasul Rza, Alekbar Salahzade, Ali Karim and Ramiz Rovshan. These authors became key figures who determined the direction of the school's development. The selected poems represented a variety of linguistic, stylistic and artistic features, which traced the desire for innovation of this literary school and departure from traditional canons. The selected poems were representative of the authors' work and the literary process in Azerbaijan, as they reflected the key ideas and aesthetic principles espoused by Rasul Rza's school. Although the analysis covered a limited number of authors and works, it revealed reasonable conclusions on the linguistic and stylistic innovation of the Rasul Raza school.

To highlight the peculiarities of the artistic style of the representatives of the literary school of Rasul Rza, the urban, landscape and philosophical types of poetry were analysed in the selected poetic texts of four authors (Rasul Rza, Ali Karim, Alekbar Salahzade, Ramiz Rovshan). The concept of free verse and its main features were analysed. With the help of stylistic analysis, the main linguistic and stylistic features of the selected works of the representatives of the literary school of Rasul Rza the use of colloquial vocabulary, stylistic figures (anaphors, epiphors, syntactic parallelism) and artistic means (metaphors, similes, epithets) were outlined. Consideration of the artistic means in the analysed texts identified trends in the development of Azerbaijani poetry. The texts were also examined for repetition, brevity, and the use of colloquial vocabulary.

Traditional canons of Azerbaijani poetry (ghazal, qasid) were compared with innovative European forms (verbier), which were actively introduced by representatives of the Rasul Rza school. The comparison was made according to the following characteristics: poem form, content (theme), linguistic and stylistic features, and traditions of poetic form. The results of the analysis defined the specifics of the writing style of the Rasul Rza school in greater detail, which contributed to the achievement of the research goal. They demonstrated how an innovative approach to style and form enriched the literary tradition and laid the foundation for Azerbaijani intellectual poetry.

Results

Features of the verlib and its rhythmic possibilities (on the example of the works of Rasul Rza's school)

In the world of literary discourse, free verse or verse-breaking is associated with the modernist movement. Modernism as an artistic movement was established in Western Europe in the last decades of the 19th century, but it came to Eastern literature later, around the 20s of the 20th century [Puymbroeck, 2020]. This led to the syncretism of various artistic movements of modernism, as they were all already developed in world art. Therefore, the arrival of the modernist movement meant the emergence of its new branches, including expressionism, impressionism, abstractionism, futurism, acmeism, dadaism, and surrealism.

Among the features of the blank verse are the following: the absence of rhyme (blank verse does not require consonance at the end of lines), freedom of structure (lines can be of any length, often varying in length to create rhythmic expressiveness), emphasis on intonation (musicality is created not by rhyme or meter, but by intonation, pauses, repetition), and aesthetic ambiguity (imagery and symbolism become the basis of meaning). The verlib originated in Europe at the end of the 19th century and spread to many pieces of literature around the world, including Azerbaijani, as a tool for literary innovation.

In Azerbaijan, the verlib became widespread only in the 20th century, in part thanks to poets who sought to move away from the traditional Arabic-Persian poetic form of ghazal and offered new ways of expressing thoughts. Young Azerbaijani poets (in particular, the authors of the Rasul Rza school) introduced free verse into urbanism through the depiction of the city and the industrial world. An example of urbanism with a twist is the poems *Dalan* [Alley], *Küçəmizin adı* [The Name of Our Street], *Qəmli küçə* [Sad Street], *Mənim küçəm* [My Street] by Rasul Rza.

The iambic tune was also used in landscape poetry, as the freedom of form allowed for a focus on describing nature. Examples of verlib in landscape poetry include Alekbar Salahzade's poem *Axşam* [Evening], Rasul Rza's poems *Dalğa* [Wave] and *Yol* [The Road], and Ramiz Rovshan's poem *Bu bahar gecəsində çiçəklər doğular* [Flowers Are Born on This Spring Night]. The verlib in philosophical lyrics is used in the poems *Taniyir* [He Knows], and *Nə hirsə oxuyur bu quş* [Why Does This Bird Sing with Anger] by Ramiz Rovshan, and poems by Ali Karim: *Ağrıya Bir neçə Söz* [A Few Words About Pain], *Marmotun silahı* [Groundhog Weapon], *Şafa* [Dawn], *Muğami dinləmək* [Listening to Mugham].

The figure of Rasul Raza occupies the same place as such representatives of free verse poetry of the 20th century as V. Nezval, P. Neruda, Y. Prever, B. Pasternak, and E. Verharna. In the literary discourse of Azerbaijan, Rasul Raza became the leader of the modernist movement and created a national school of free poetry. Thanks to Rasul Raza's literary school, with its associative and metaphorical style, the language of Azerbaijani poetry acquired new shades and rhythmicity. The artistic value of poetry is determined by the originality and imagery of the text, in particular rhythmicity, and its aesthetic appeal is mainly determined by the smoothness of reading and the vividness of images [Chaudhuri et al., 2024].

One of the factors that determine the uniqueness of Rasul Raza and literary school in the history of Azerbaijani poetry is the linguistic and stylistic features that are innovative in nature. In fact, this issue is especially relevant in the study of Azerbaijani poetry in general and in the study of the national language of poetry, as well as in the creation of a scientific concept of the language of poetry.

The trends in the development of poetry of this school in the 1960s and 1980s, the variety of lyrical and philosophical images, the comprehension of simple, everyday themes, the discovery of new poetic thought with the description and glorification of the every day, the innovation of language and style: a system of metaphors, rhythm, shades of intonation, harmony, are a separate poetic area of research. The representatives of this literary school were R. Rza, A. Karim, A. Salahzade, I. Ismailzade, F. Goja, F. Sadik, V. Samadoglu, V. Jabrailzade (Vahif Bayat Oder), R. Rovshan, A. Abdullah, etc. Their works are united by a lyrical and metaphorical style but with different features of individual poetic styles. Thus, V. Samadoglu, V. Jabrailzade, and R. Rovshan represented the literary trend of decadence in Azerbaijani poetry at a certain stage of their work in the 1970s. The characteristic features of the linguistic and stylistic literary school were philosophical lyricism and associative artistic tendency, intellectualism, fragmentation,

lyrical and philosophical generalisation, subtext and symbolism (lyrical and metaphorical style), poetic individuality and freedom of form, free natural conversational intonation and internal rhythm and harmony, poetic skill and laconicism, depiction of everyday details, etc.

Rhythm is a poetic necessity for the construction of a poem, which in turn interacts with other artistic elements to create a poem [Hamid and Saleh, 2024]. The rhythmic possibilities of the Azerbaijani spoken language are expressed through narration in a normal conversational tone, characteristic of the free development of poetry, which is clearly observed in the literary school of Rasul Rza:

"Mən nə xiyabanam; / küçələr küçəsi, / nə işlək küçəyəm; / səs dolu gündüzü, / nur dolu gecəsi. / Mən dalanam, adica dalan" ["I am not an avenue; / a street of streets, / nor a busy street; / a voice-filled daytime, / a light-filled night. / I am an alley, a simple alley"] [Rza, 2005];

"Üstü qırmızı kirəmit bir evdə / mən anadan olmuşam. / O zaman, / kölgəsi meydan çinarın, / şirəsi dərman / gülüyşə narın / şöhrəti hələ / gəzmirdi dildən-dilə. / Küçəmizin adı yoxdu belə. / Bizim məhləyə Arvanüstü deyərdilər; / evimizin qabağından axan / Arvan çayının adına görə" ["In a house with a red tile roof / I was born. / At that time, / the shadow of the square plane tree, / its sap a medicine / the rose honeysuckle / its fame had not yet / spread from mouth to mouth. / Our street had no name at all. / Our neighbourhood was called Arvanüstü; / named after the Arvan river / flowing in front of our house"] [Rza, 2005];

"Yəqin xoşbəxt küçələr də var; / bayramlı, toylu. / Mən olmuşam / insanların son mənzil yolu. / Mən qəmli küçəyəm, qəmli. / Sınası yoxuşlu, / səkiləri aynəmli. / Bir gün ayrıldım / gecənin səksəkəli yuxusundan" ["Surely there are happy streets too; / festive, full of celebrations. / I have been / the last path of people. / I am a sad street, sad. / My chest is sloping, / my sidewalks are ragged. / One day I parted / from the restless sleep of the night"] [Rza, 2005].

This type of verse development reveals the possibilities of poetry, intonation and pronunciation of the vernacular in the nature of the Azerbaijani vernacular. This cycle of poems by R. Rza is dedicated to the image of the street: *Qəmli küçəp* [Sad Street], *Dalan* [Alley], *Küçəmizin adı* [The Name of Our Street]. The author creates images of streets that are close to reality: a lively street, where the day is full of sounds and the night is full of light, where people meet; a street without a name, which runs alongside a brick house; a street that absorbs the stories of people: an elderly man seeing off a student son or a mother seeing off a daughter.

Another characteristic feature of free poetry is artistic repetition (anaphora, epiphora), which became widely used in the literary school of Rasul Rza. Such rhythmic devices are mostly derived from verbose folk poetry, as they have a strong rhythmic feature in free poetry. According to a study by Z. Shareef and S. Kabir [2020], repetition in poetry, including the repetition of letters, words, phrases and derivational repetition, can impart a rhythmic dimension and musical melody to a poem. In this context, the poem *Mən torpağam* [I Am the Land] is significant:

"Mən torpağam, mənə atəş yandırmaz; / tərkibimdə kömürüm var, / külüm var. / Mən baharam çəmən-çəmən / çiçəyim var, gülüm var. / Mən küləyəm, əsməyəm, / kim bilər ki, mən varam. / Mən buludam, səhraları susuz görüb, / ağlaram. / Mən ürəyəm, döyünməyəm / ölərəm. / Mən insanam, / sadə insan ələnin / yaratdığı nemətlərlə öyünməyəm / ölərəm" [I am the land, fire does not burn me; / I have coal, / I have ash within me. / I am the spring, meadow after meadow, / I have flowers, I have roses. / I am the wind, if I do not blow, / who knows that I exist. / I am the cloud, having seen the deserts thirsty, / I weep. / I am the heart, if I do not beat / I die. / I am human, / if I do not boast / of the blessings created by the hand of simple man / I die.] [Rza, 2005].

In the text, the author resorts to anaphora, a stylistic device that consists of repeating the same sounds, words, and sentences at the beginning of two or more adjacent lines, stanzas, or phrases. Rasul Rza creates a special concept of "land". The author successfully combines the features of philosophical and landscape poetry, the following images of nature appear: spring, meadow flower, rose, wind, cloud, river. The author uses self-personification in writings: "I am the wind...", "I am the cloud...", "I am the heart...", "I am the man...", "I am the light...", "I am the river...", "I am the man...".

The single beginning is also observed in the poetry of R. Rovshan and A. Sakhaladze. In a poem *Bu dünyanı böldüm* [I Divided This World] [Adishirin, 2025], A. Sakhaladze uses the “I” in the stanzas. The poem has a philosophical intention: the lyrical hero realises that the world has been divided into two sides, black and white:

“Bu dünyanı böldüm; / yaxşılığı seçdim / onu şərdən ayırdım. / Bu dünyanı böldüm; / ləzzətlər haram idi, / halal dərdi xoşuma gəldi. / ...Bu dünyanı böldüm; / ağa ağ dedim, / Qara qara dedim” [“I divided this world; / I chose goodness / separating it from evil. / I divided this world; / pleasures were forbidden, / but I liked lawful pain. / ...I divided this world; / I called white white, / Black black”] [Adishirin, 2025].

R. Rovshan’s poem *Bu bahar gecəsində çiçəklər doğular* [Flowers Are Born on This Spring Night] is a landmark in this context. The central image of the poem is a flower, which becomes a symbol of new life, hope, but also vulnerability and innocence. The author contrasts the image of spring, as a season of rebirth and new life, with the cruel reality of war. Flowers, which are usually associated with joy and beauty, are born in hospital wards and to the sound of gunfire, which emphasises the tragic nature of the situation. The poem is based on contrasts: spring is war, life is death, beauty is destruction. The author uses the repetition of the phrase “On this spring night, flowers are born” to emphasise the paradoxical nature of the situation:

“Bu bahar gecəsində çiçəklər doğulur, / bu yaz gecəsində sevməyə nə var?! / ...Bu yaz gecəsində çiçəklər doğulur / uzaq xəstəxana palatalarında. / ...Bu yaz gecəsində çiçəklər doğulur, / güllə səslərinə açılır güllər. / Bu yaz gecəsində çiçəklər doğulur / Parisdə, / Tabrizdə, / həyatimizdə. / Bu yaz gecəsində bəlkə həsrətimiz də çiçəklənər” [“On this spring night, flowers are born, / what is there to love on this spring night?! / ...On this spring night, flowers are born / in distant hospital wards. / ...On this spring night, flowers are born, / flowers open to the sound of gunfire. / On this spring night, flowers are born / in Paris, / Tabriz, / in our courtyard. / On this spring night, perhaps our longing will also bloom”] [Rovshan, 2015].

Another rhythmometric device in the poetry of the Rasul Rza literary school is syntactic parallelism, a technique based on the same syntactic and intonational construction of several sentences. After all, imagery and rhythm influence the artistic formation in poetry, acting on the internal and external levels to achieve aesthetics and enhance meanings [Al-Batahi and Kamoni, 2024]. Parallelism in poetry enhances emotional response and aesthetic appreciation [Menninghaus et al., 2017].

In the poem *Ruhum Yağış İstəyir* [My Soul Desires Rain], R. Rza used the repetition of the construction “such rain that...”, creating the effect of increasing and intensifying the desire of the lyrical hero. It describes the desired rain in detail, emphasising its cleansing and healing power. Repetition enhances the emotional intensity of the text and creates the impression of a monologue addressed to nature:

“Ruhum yağış istəyir; / elə bir yağış ki / köynəyimi çıxarıb, doyuncaya qədər orada dayana bilərəm... / Elə yağış, / Damcılarına salamat üzümü tuta bilərəm... / Elə yağış ki / Üzərimdə ayaqyalın gəzə bilərəm... / Canım yağış istəyir, / gurultulu/böyük, ağır yağış damcıları” [“My soul desires rain; / such a rain / that I can take off my shirt and stand there until I am satisfied... / Such a rain, / whose drops I can safely hold my face to... / Such a rain / that I can walk barefoot on it... / My soul desires rain, / loud / great, heavy raindrops.”] [Rza, 2005].

In the poem *Şafa* [Dawn] by A. Karim, syntactic parallelism is achieved through the repetition of the construction “I see the cure”. This technique emphasises the comprehensiveness of the theme of illness and cure, which permeates the entire poem. Repetition creates a sense of monotony and hopelessness, emphasising the tragedy of the situation:

“Hara getsəm... / kəndə, şəhərə, / Dərman görürəm / ...İndi hər otaqda / Dərman görürəm. / Müləica həttə Dəranin özünə də işıq salır; / Dərmandan yuxarı / Dərman görürəm” [“Wherever I go... / to the village, to the city, / I see medicine / ...Now in every room / I see medicine. / Treatment even shines light on the valley itself; / Above the medicine / I see medicine”] [Karim, 2004].

In the poem *Muğami dinləmək* [Listening to Mugham] by A. Karim, syntactic parallelism is used to create contrasting images. The repetition of the construction “One side...” reveals the versatility of the inner world of a person, demonstrating complexity and contradictions:

“Qaranlanmış sarı simdən dönə-dönə bir səs çıxır. / Dərd qopar, sevinc qopar, / Söz qopar. / ...Bir tərəf. ruhun isti, / Bir yanı rəngarəng, / Bir tərəfi Ruhum dumanlı / Bir yanı buz kimi soyuq” [“From the darkened yellow string, a sound twists and turns. / Sorrow breaks out, joy breaks out, / Words break out. / ...One side is warm, / One side colourful, / One side my soul is foggy / One side is as cold as ice”] [Karim, 2004].

According to the study of A. Benito-Santos et al. [2023], the rhythmic analysis of poetry is based on the systematic statistical analysis and comparison of sound techniques (e.g., rhythmic patterns) that arise from the combination of pre-established aesthetic and structural rules and the ability of the creative poet to convey a message. Therefore, a description of the use of rhythmic devices in the poetry of Rasul Rza’s literary school is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Rhythmic techniques in the works of the Azerbaijani school of Rasul Rzy

A rhythmic remedy	Description	Examples
Conversational tone	Use normal conversational vocabulary and tone	Rasul Rza: <i>“Mən nə xiyabanam; / küçələr küçəsi, / nə işlək küçəyəm; / səs dolu gündüzü, / nur dolu gecəsi. / Mən dalanam, adica dalan”</i> (Dalan) [“I am not an avenue; / a street of streets, / nor a busy street; / a voice-filled daytime, / a light-filled night. / I am an alley, a simple alley” (Alley)]; <i>“Küçəmizin adı yoxdu belə”</i> (Küçəmizin adı) [“Our street had no name at all” (The Name of Our Street)]
Anaphora (singular beginning)	Repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of lines or stanzas	Rasul Rza: <i>“Mən torpağam, mənı atəş yandırılmaz; / Mən baharam çəmən-çəmən / çiçəyim var, gülüm var. / Mən küləyəm, əsməsəm, / kim bilər ki, mən varam. / Mən buludam...”</i> [“I am the earth, fire cannot burn me; / I am spring, meadow to meadow / I have blossoms, I have flowers. / I am the wind – if I do not blow, / who would know that I exist? / I am the cloud...”]; Alekbar Salahadze: <i>“Bu dünyanı böldüm; / yaxşılığı seçdim... / Bu dünyanı böldüm; / ləzzətlər haram idi...”</i> [“I divided this world; / I chose goodness... / I divided this world; / pleasures were forbidden...”]
Repetition	Repeated use of words or phrases to enhance emotional impact	Ramiz Rovshan: <i>“Bu bahar gecəsində çiçəklər doğulur...”</i> [“On this spring night, flowers are being born...”] (repeating the phrase)
Syntactic parallelism	The same syntactic and intonation structure of several sentences	Rasul Rza: <i>“Ruhum yağış istəyir; / elə bir yağış ki / köynəyimi çıxarıb... / Elə yağış, / Damcılarına salamat üzümü tuta bilərəm... / Elə yağış ki / Üzərində ayaqyalın gəzə bilərəm...”</i> [“My soul longs for rain; / the kind of rain / that makes me take off my shirt... / The kind of rain / whose drops I can meet with my bare face... / The kind of rain / I can walk barefoot upon...”]; Ali Karim: <i>“Hara getsəm... / kəndə, şəhərə, / Dərman görürəm / ...İndi hər otaqda / Dərman görürəm”</i> [Wherever I go... / to the village, to the city, / I see medicine / ...Now in every room / I see medicine]
Conciseness	Use short, simple sentences to create a dynamic rhythm	Rasul Rza: <i>“Mən gedirəm. Yol sonsuzdur. Qum. Daşlar. Külək. Hər şey hərəkət edir və mən də onunlayam”</i> [“I am going. The road is endless. Sand. Stones. Wind. Everything is moving, and I am with it”]

Thus, the poets of Rasul Rza’s school actively used a variety of rhythmic means to enrich their poems. The use of colloquial tone and laconic sentences indicates the desire to bring poetry closer to everyday life and to depart from the traditional high style. Anaphora, repetition, and syntactic parallelism are used to enhance the emotional impact and create rhythmic organisation, and imagery in poetic texts. These rhythmic techniques helped the authors to achieve depth of expression, enhance the emotional impact on the reader and create unique poetic images. In

the studied poems, they were used to convey various emotions and states: from longing and hopelessness to joy and peace and understanding the functions of syntactic parallelism delved deeper into the works of Azerbaijani poets and appreciate their artistic value.

Linguistic and stylistic innovations and poetic means of Rasul Rza's literary school

The use of new poetic means (metaphors, epithets, allusions), syntactic figures, and verbal innovation in the process of text creation became one of the main linguistic and stylistic features of the literary school. However, the authors of the poetic school preferred to compare the subject with an ordinary, seemingly simple object that seems inappropriate from the point of view of poetic texture. For example, in the poem *Mənim küçəm* [My Street], R. Rza greets the street, asphalt, trees and sidewalks as old friends and reminds of the past of Hüseyu Hacıyev Street, the "mouth" of this street, its sidewalks with scuff marks reminiscent of a drunkard's rare teeth:

"Kənarları diş kimi töküldü. sərxoşlar / səkilərdə / tez-tez / insan hərarətini hiss edirdin/ yalın ayaqlarımdan. /... Ehtiyatsızlıqdan sənə tüpürənlərə/ İntiqam almırmış kimi/ gözlərimi doldurarsan/ toz-qum / . Harada böyük-küçük / tısbağa kimi / sinəsinə daş işlənmiş" ["Its edges fell off like teeth. Drunkards / on the sidewalks / often / you could feel the human warmth / from my bare feet. /... To those who spit on you carelessly / you fill my eyes / like taking revenge / with dust and sand. / Where big and small / like turtles / have stones embedded in their chest"] [Rza, 2005].

The author did not create rhetoric but played a unique role in creating the image of the old street.

The avoidance of the historical and poetic tradition and the search for a new poetic form were an indicator of the individual poetic style of R. Rza's literary school, as well as one of the requirements of modern and intellectual poetry. In this regard, E. Akimova [2018], studying the works of the successors of Raza's literary school, noted that the change in the means of artistic description and expressiveness of the poem, the sharpness of associative thinking, and the polyphonic shade of similes and metaphors contributed to consistency in dynamic and playful poetry. In the poem *Tanış qala* [Familiar Fortress], the researcher witnessed an attempt to change the means of artistic description and expressiveness of the poem:

"Döyüşdülər: / səsləri / alt dodaqlarından / yuxarı dodaqlarına çatmadılar. / Döyüşdülər: / ilə onlardan yetmiş birə çox olan düşmən – yetmişə bir / süngüləri darağın qalın dişləri kimi olan düşmənlə..." ["They fought: / their voices / did not reach / from their lower lips / to their upper lips. / They fought: / against an enemy seventy-one times greater than them – seventy to one / the enemy whose bayonets are like the thick teeth of a comb..."] [Rza, 2005].

Rasul Raza uses the phrases "the lips that separate day from night", "prisoner of desire, prisoner of opportunity", "the south of our heart", etc.

The search for epithets, metaphors, and similes led to the creation of a new poetic idea. Representatives of R. Rza's literary school were not seeking a theme; they introduced into the poetic text the familiar, what everyone observed. However, their poetic findings on "ordinary" topics changed the traditional perspective of our poetry, and their poems, which began to reveal modern shades, became a new unit of measurement, and defined a unique writing and style. For example, in the poem *Fəvvarə* [Fountain] by A. Salahzade, with an unconventional form of expression (verlib) and new poetic metaphors, describes the process of transforming the so-called "sleeping" water into a fountain, its rise and fall is depicted in such a way that the sound of water "resurrects" into words, and from the words a new "fountain" is born and each stanza turns into a poetic picture:

"Bir boşqab yatan su / Ayağa qalxdı / Qalxdı. / Su havada fırlandı/ Parıldayan və parıldayan / Sanki. Balıq / Özünü yenə boşqaba atır. / Şüşə-şüşə səmaya parıldayır, / Bir sıçrayışla boşqaba uçar, / Qanad çalib boşqaba, / Gün əriyib qaba gəlir, / Bulud əriyib boşqaba gəlir" ["A plate of sleeping water / rose up / rose up. / The water spun in the air / shining and shining / as if. A fish / throws itself again into the plate. / Glass by glass it shines to the sky, / with a splash it flies into the plate, / flapping wings into the plate, / the sun melts and comes to the plate, / the cloud melts and comes to the plate"] [Adishirin, 2025].

The poem compares the fountain to a “water uprising” and a “water peacock” that sleeps in a “quiet plate”, shuddering and waking up when it starts to move (“They shake and wake the water vessel”).

In the poem *Axşam* [Evening], A. Salahzade personifies the image of the evening. The author attached it to the wings of birds, to the leaves:

“Axşam qanad aldı – / yorğun quşlara əzab verdi. / Axşam yarpaqlarda oturdu – / ağaclar titrədi! / əl sıxaraq görüşəndə axşam qarışdı” [“Evening took wings – / it tormented the tired birds. / Evening sat on the leaves – / the trees trembled! / When shaking hands and meeting, evening mingled”];

“Əl sıxaraq görüşdükdə / axşam utancaq göründü / əlimizdə çırpınan!..” [“When shaking hands and meeting / evening appeared shy / fluttering in our hands!..”];

“Axşam gülüş və səslərə dondu” [“Evening froze into laughter and sounds”] [Adishirin, 2025].

The image of the evening in the above poem “fluttered”, “froze”, “sat on the leaves”, and “sat on the wings”. In this way, the author attempted to stimulate the imagination, to visualise the unthinkable and to embody it in an unrealistic poetic text. A. Salahzadeh successfully uses natural phenomena (evening, birds, leaves) to convey a person’s inner feelings.

A. Brown [2020] noted that poetry can reveal the soul of a city through personification and metaphors, enabling a subtle understanding of urban landscapes and promoting spiritual literacy. The poem is full of metaphors and allegories that create an atmosphere of mystery and intrigue: evening (a symbol of the end of the day, peace, but also melancholy and reflection), birds (symbolising freedom, the pursuit of the highest, as well as vulnerability and dependence on nature), leaves (a symbol of life, change, and falling). The basis of poetry is the interaction between man and nature, the influence of the human inner state on the surrounding world. The author demonstrates how simple human actions (shaking hands) can cause changes in nature, and how the inner world of a person is reflected in the outer world. The poet tries to convey the idea that everything in the world is interconnected. Evening, as a symbol of calm and reflection, witnesses an important moment in a person’s life: a meeting or a farewell. This moment is intense enough to cause changes in nature.

R. Rovshan’s poetry is noted for the deep philosophy, experimentalism and originality of language. The author actively uses various poetic techniques to create a unique world of images and emotions. The use of syntactic constructions, metaphors and symbols helps to convey the complex inner experiences of the lyrical hero. In the poem *Taniyir* [He Knows] by R. Rovshan, the repetition of the construction “He knows,” (*“Son nəğməsindən tanıyır. / Mən ayrı quşam, ayrı quş. / Yarı bülbül, yarı bayquş. / Bu dünyanı mən boyda quş / Öz qəfəsindən tanıyır”*) [“He recognises from the last song. / I am a different bird, a separate bird. / Half nightingale, half owl. / This world, as big as a bird, / recognises itself from its cage”] [Rovshan, 2015]), creates the effect of accumulating knowledge, wisdom, and experience. This emphasises the comprehensiveness of the lyrical protagonist’s knowledge, and ability to understand the world on a deep level. In the text, the author compares himself to a bird that is half nightingale and half owl (*“Mən ayrı quşam, ayrı quş. / Yarı bülbül, yarı bayquş”*). This technique demonstrates the complexity and contradictions of the inner world of the lyrical hero. The image of the cage (*“Bu dünyanı mən boyda quş / Öz qəfəsindən tanıyır”*) symbolises the limited human capabilities and the feeling of being imprisoned in one’s world.

An example of R. Rovshan’s complex philosophical poetry is the poem *Gedəcək* [He Will Go], imbued with a sense of hopelessness and longing. The author paints a picture of the end of the world, where all life perishes:

“...qanı gedəcək. / Solacaq bağçası-bağı, / Quruyacaq son budağı, / Dənizin suyu-balığı, / Sahilin qumu gedəcək” [“...its blood will drain away. / Its garden will wither, / The last branch will dry up, / The sea’s water and fish, / The sand of the shore will disappear”] [Rovshan, 2015].

The metaphors “the world is bleeding”, “the last branch to dry up”, and “sea water-fish” create a picture of general decline and death. The poem *Nə hirsə oxuyur bu quş* [Why

Does This Bird Sing with Anger] by the same poet impresses with its unconventional images and sharp social criticism. The author uses vivid metaphors and similes to create a satirical image of a society where everything is turned upside down. A barking bird is the central image that symbolises the absurdity of a society where everything is mixed up. The bird, which is supposed to sing, barks similarly to a dog, indicating the degradation and loss of instincts:

“Nə hirsə oxuyur bu quş, / Mahnı deyil, qarğışdı bu. / Elə bil hürür adama, / Yarı it, yarı quşdu bu”
[“Why does this bird sing with anger, / It is not a song, but a curse. / It seems to bark at a person, / Half dog, half bird it is”] [Rovshan, 2015].

The dog is a symbol of rudeness, aggression, and earthiness. The country is a symbol of a society dominated by negative phenomena:

“Yazıq hürməsin, neyləsin, / Bəlkə günü it gündü. / ...Quş olub hür, it olub uç, / Kimdi görən bu ölkədə?! / İti qab dibi yalayan, / Quşu hürən bu ölkədə...” [“Poor thing, let it not bark, what else can it do, / Maybe the day is the day of the dog. / ...Becoming a bird barking, becoming a dog flying, / Who sees this in the country?! / A dog licking the bottom of a bowl, / A bird barking in this country...”] [Rovshan, 2015].

This poem is a critique of a society dominated by negative phenomena, where people lose their natural essence and turn into evil beings. The author highlights the absurdity and meaninglessness of this situation with the help of grotesque images. A. Eminov [2019] noted that R. Rovshan’s poetry is an artistic vision of the poet’s wise complex and polyphonic work of imagination, which fosters foresight in a person, and what is heard and perceived is stored in memory as images.

One of Rasul Rza’s innovative approaches was the use of short, laconic sentences and phrases that created a dynamic rhythm and emphasised the emotionality of the text. In the poem *Yol* [*The Road*], the author uses a list of short sentences:

“Mən gedirəm. Yol sonsuzdur. Qum. Daşlar. Külək. Hər şey hərəkət edir və mən də onunlayam” [“I am going. The road is endless. Sand. Stones. Wind. Everything moves, and I am with it”] [Rza, 2005].

This syntactic brevity created an impression of movement and speed, reflecting both the energy and tension of modern life. In addition, Rza experiments with word placement, changing the traditional order and providing an associative and intuitive character. In the poem *Dalğa* [*Wave*], the repetition of words and the violation of syntactic norms create the effect of undulating movement: *“Dalğa gəlir. Dalğa geri qayıdır. Dalğa danışır. Dalğa susur...”* [“The wave comes. The wave returns. The wave speaks. The wave is silent...”] [Rza, 2005].

The flexibility and conciseness of the word, maximalism in the concise expression of poetic thought, and lyrical and philosophical generalisations are also features of the poetic language and style of the Rasul Rza literary school. For the representatives of the Rasul Rza poetic school, laconicism was born out of associative thinking, and it was more evident in poetic texts aimed at summarising. Sometimes the authors avoided unnecessary words and phrases, suffixes, nominal clauses with enumerative intonation, and word additions, and resorted to compound sentences (adding a clause member):

“Kim gülür, hər yerdə gülür, / Ağlayan sonda gülür. / Sən ağlayanda kim gülür? / Güləndə ağlayanlar...”
[“Who laughs, laughs everywhere, / who cries, laughs at the end. / Who laughs when he cries / who cries when he laughs...”] [Adishirin, 2025].

This stanza indicates the cyclicity, paradox of life and the inextricable link between joy and grief. The characteristics of the main linguistic and stylistic features of Rasul Rza’s literary school are grouped in Table 2.

Table 2

Analysis of the linguistic and stylistic features of the literary school of Rasul Rza

Features	Description	Examples
New poetic metaphors, epithets, and similes	Unconventional, often ordinary images to create fresh poetic ideas	Rasul Rza: " <i>Kənarları diş kimi töküldü sərxoşlar</i> " ["The edges, like teeth, have fallen out of drunkards"], "the lips that separate day from night"; A. Salahadze: "water peacock" (fountain), "sleeping water"; Ramiz Rovshan: " <i>Yarı bülbül, yarı bayquş</i> " ["Half nightingale, half owl"]
Avoiding the historical and poetic tradition	Search for new poetic forms and means of expression, a departure from the established canons	Rasul Rza: " <i>Taniş qala</i> " (use of unconventional comparisons, " <i>süngüləri darağın qalın dişləri kimi</i> " – "bayonets like thick comb teeth")
Language innovation	Experiments with language, use of colloquial vocabulary, creation of neologisms, violation of syntactic norms	Rasul Rza: " <i>Mən dalanam, adicə dalan</i> " ["I am an alley, an ordinary alley"]; A. Salahadze: personification of the evening in the poetry of <i>Axşam</i> [Evening]
Laconicism and brevity of presentation	Use of short, concise sentences and phrases, giving preference to nominal sentences and enumerative tone	Rasul Rza: " <i>Mən gedirəm. Yol sonsuzdur. Qum. Daşlar. Külək. Hər şey hərəkət edir və mən də onunlayam</i> " ["I am leaving. The road is endless. Sand. Stones. Wind. Everything is in motion, and I am with it"]; A. Salahadze: " <i>Kim gülür, hər yerdə gülür, / Ağlayan sonda gülür</i> " ["Whoever laughs, laughs everywhere, / The one who cries, laughs in the end"]
Verlib	Active introduction of free verse, rejection of traditional rhyme and meter	Poems by Rasul Rza (<i>Mənim küçəm</i> [My Street], <i>Dalan</i> [Alley]), A. Salahzadeh (<i>Fəvvarə</i> [Fountain], <i>Axşam</i> [Evening]), Ramiz Rovshan (<i>Taniyir</i> [He Knows], <i>Gedəcək</i> [He Will Go])
Philosophical depth	Reflections on the meaning of life, the place of man in the world, and the use of symbols and allegories	Ramiz Rovshan: <i>Gedəcək</i> [He Will Go] (an image of the end of the world), " <i>Nə hirsli oxuyur bu quş</i> " ["How angrily this bird sings"] (a satirical image of society)

According to Table 2, Rasul Rza's literary school was characterised by individuality in terms of poetic language and form. The poets actively used artistic means (metaphors, epithets, similes). The use of the iambic tongue and laconic sentences indicates a desire to depart from traditional canons, and the iambic tongue became an important literary element for Azerbaijani poets, especially in the context of literary innovation. Its introduction contributed to the renewal of the poetic tradition, enrichment of linguistic expression and expansion of thematic boundaries, making it one of the central forms in the country's contemporary literature.

A distinctive feature of Rasul Rza's poetic school lies in its deliberate incorporation of colloquial vocabulary into poetic discourse, which marked a significant departure from the elevated and formal diction characteristic of traditional Azerbaijani poetry. This use of everyday language not only democratized the poetic voice, making it more accessible and relatable to a wider audience, but also enriched the texture of the poetry by embedding familiar linguistic nuances and cultural references. For instance, in the poem *Mənim küçəm* [My Street], Rza employs the expression "*mən dalanam, adicə dalan*" ["I am an alley, a simple alley"], where the use of "*adicə*" (plain, ordinary) exemplifies colloquial simplicity and emotional directness, far from the ornate and classical style of ghazal poetry. Similarly, phrases like "*sınəsi yoxuşlu*" ["with a sloping chest"] and "*səkiləri əynəmli*" ["sidewalks ragged like clothes"] from *Qəmli küçə* [Sad Street] rely on spoken idioms and imagery drawn from a daily urban life, creating vivid and intimate portrayals of environment and mood.

This linguistic innovation is accompanied by a parallel enrichment of symbolic imagery. Symbols within the poetic texts often function as metaphoric condensations of broader existential or socio-political commentary. A notable example is the motif of the street recurring across several poems by Rza, such as *Dalan*, *Küçəmizin adı*, and *Qəmli küçə*. Here, the street becomes more than a geographical location; it symbolises the journey of life, the anonymity of individual histories (“*Küçəmizin adı yoxdu belə*” – “Our street had no name at all”), and even the burden of collective sorrow. Another poignant symbol is found in Rza’s *Mən torpağam* [*I Am the Land*], where elemental imagery such as coal, ash, cloud, and wind represents enduring strength, memory, and the cyclical nature of human experience. The line *Mən küləyəm, əsməyəm, kim bilər ki, mən varam* [“I am the wind, if I do not blow, who knows that I exist”] illustrates how a simple natural image becomes a profound meditation on visibility and existence.

Moreover, in Ramiz Rovshan’s *Nə hirsə oxuyur bu quş* [*Why Does This Bird Sing with Anger*], the grotesque transformation of a bird into a barking creature (“*yarı it, yarı quşdu bu*” – “half dog, half bird”) symbolises a society in moral decline, where even natural instincts are distorted. Here, the bird ceases to be a lyrical figure of beauty and becomes a metaphor for a corrupted voice in a dysfunctional world. Similarly, the image of the fountain in Alekbar Salahzadə’s *Fəvvarə* [*Fountain*] transforms from a physical structure into a metaphor of poetic rebirth and cyclical renewal. The rising water, described as a “water peacock” or a “plate of sleeping water”, acquires symbolic meaning as the poet’s voice awakening from silence and transforming mundane observation into artistic transcendence.

The contribution of Rasul Rza’s poetic school to modern Azerbaijani literature and its global reception

Rasul Rza’s literary school significantly affected the development of modern Azerbaijani literature, determining its innovative course and forming the foundations of a modern approach to creativity. Rasul Rza’s innovations in poetry, stylistics and language design became a substantial source of inspiration for subsequent generations of writers, significantly influencing the development of Azerbaijani literature. By rejecting conservative linguistic patterns, the author introduced a lively colloquial language into literature and modernised the vocabulary, making literary texts closer to the reader and more relevant to social realities.

The literary school of Rza also influenced the development of free verse (verlib) in Azerbaijani literature, expressing individual emotions and worldviews. In addition, the work and views of the poets of this school contributed to the establishment of national identity, which was reflected in the themes and direction of the literary works of followers. Thus, Rasul Rza’s school laid the foundation for modern Azerbaijani literature, integrating national characteristics with global trends, and paving the way for the creation of literature that resonates both locally and internationally.

In Azerbaijan, the Rasul Rza School of Poetry has gained recognition for its innovation and universal themes that transcended local culture. Table 3 provides a comparative analysis of the traditional forms of Azerbaijani poetry and the Rasul Rza school, which enriched Azerbaijani literature with new forms, content, and linguistic means.

Table 3 highlights the key differences between classical poetic forms such as the ghazal and qasidah and the innovative verlib, which were actively introduced by representatives of the Rasul Rza school. The key differences are that the classical forms were characterised by a rigid structure, rhyme, and size, while the verse offered freedom from these restrictions. This approach reflected the desire for individual expression and a departure from the established canons of the representatives of Rasul Rza’s poetic school. Expanding the thematic boundaries, turning to philosophical reflections and individual experiences, indicated a change in the poets’ worldview and interests. In addition, traditional poetry uses high style and rich metaphor, while innovative poetry uses colloquial vocabulary, experiments with rhythm and syntax, etc. along with artistic means. Thus, the verse became substantial for expressing new ideas and emotions, and the school’s innovation was not only in form but also in a deep rethinking of traditional themes and images.

Table 3

Comparative analysis of traditional and innovative forms of Azerbaijani poetry

Characteristic	Traditional canons (gazelle, kasida)	Innovative European forms (verlibre)
Form	Gazelle: couplet (bate), mono-rhyme; Kasida: mono-rim bats	Free verse, no rhyme or meter
Examples	Gazelle: Fizuli's "Məni candan usandırdı..." ["She has wearied me of life..."], Nizami Ganjavi's "Xosrov və Şirin" ["Khosrow and Shirin"]; Kasida: Katran Tabrizi, "Tərkib-i bənd" ["Composition of Stanzas"]	Rasul Rza's <i>Mənim küçəm</i> [My Street], Ali Karim's <i>Marmotun silahı</i> [Groundhog Weapon], Alekbar Salahzadeh's <i>Fəvvarə</i> [Fountain], and Ramiz Rovshan's <i>Təniyir</i> [He Knows]
Content	Gazelle: love songs, reflections on God, mystical philosophy; Kasida: praise for shahs, religious figures, and prominent personalities	Contemporary issues, philosophy, urban and landscape poetry, individual experiences, experiments with form and content
Examples	Gazelle: Fizuli "Eşq nədir?" ["What is Love?"], Nizami "Leyli və Məcnun" ["Layla and Majnun"]; Kasida: Katran Tabrizi "Qəsidə-i təvhid" ["Qasida of Divine Unity"]	Rasul Rza's <i>Dalan</i> [Alley], Ali Karim's <i>Ağrıya Bir neçə Söz</i> [A Few Words About Pain], Alekbar Salahzadeh's <i>Axşam</i> [Evening], and Ramiz Rovshan's <i>Gedəcək</i> [He Will Go]
Language	High style, rich metaphor, use of Arabic and Persian lexical borrowings; Strict rhythmic organisation, clear size	Use of colloquial vocabulary, rejection of high style, experiments with rhythm, intonation, syntax; Use of unconventional metaphors, symbols, images
Examples	Fizuli: "Ey könül, eşq əlindən zər-i mübəttəlamı?" [O heart, do I suffer from love?]; Nizami: "Gördüm o simindən bir zərrə nur" [I saw a ray of light from her silver]	Rasul Rza: "Kənarları diş kimi töküldü sərxoşlar" ["The edges, like teeth, have fallen out of drunkards"]; Alekbar Salahzade: "Bir boşqab yatan su ayağa qalxdı" ["The water that was in the plate rose"]; Ramiz Rovshan: "Yarı bülbül, yarı bayquş" ["Half nightingale, half owl"]
Traditions	Adherence to established canons, imitation of classical models; High poetic culture, and developed system of images and symbols	Departure from traditional canons, search for new forms of expression; the influence of European modern poetry
Examples	Imitation of the style of Fizuli and Nizami; Adherence to the rules of aruz; Use of traditional images of Leila and Majnun	Experiments with form, rejection of traditional images; use of urban motifs, and psychological lyrics
Examples	Traditional epithets: "leyli", "mejnun", and "gul"; Allusions to the Koran, hadith	New epithets: "the liquid teeth of a drunkard" (R. Rza), "water peacock" (A. Salahzade)

The Rzy school is promoted internationally through translations of its works into various languages, which makes Azerbaijani poetry accessible to the public. Currently, the Azerbaijan State Translation Centre is operating, and one of its activities is to promote translated and published Azerbaijani literature in the international arena and the best literary examples of foreign countries in Azerbaijan. In addition, the ideas of the school are echoed in literary readings, where such topics as the modernisation of poetic forms, the synthesis of national and global cultural elements, and the rethinking of the role of the poet in the modern world are discussed. Among them is the academic reading *Ode to high poetry* [Mustafaev, 2024.]. Rza's works, the bold use of linguistic and stylistic innovations and openness to new forms, have become a source of inspiration for poets and literary critics in Europe and Asia. The significance of Rasul Rza's school is extremely important for the formation of the poetic verb as a universal literary tool capable of conveying complex philosophical ideas through simplicity of form. This creates prospects for a dialogue between traditional poetic schools and contemporary literature. Promoting the ideas of the Rza school of poetry will help broaden the perception of contemporary Azerbaijani literature and its contribution to the world literary context.

Discussion

The study of the linguistic and stylistic features of Rasul Rza's poetic school has led to several conclusions. One of the results of this study was that the innovative nature of Rasul Rza's literary school is manifested in the change of traditional ideas about poetic language. The poets of this school actively experimented with verse form, vocabulary and syntax, creating a unique poetic style. A. Guliyeva [2022] analysed the role of wordsmiths in the development of the Azerbaijani literary language. Rasul Rza was one of these authors, and the results of the study of the poet's artistic language showed that the author specialised in the search for new forms and artistic means. In particular, the emotionally coloured vocabulary in poems evokes both positive and negative emotions.

E. Gul [2011] noted that the innovative poetry of Rasul Rza with its philosophical lyricism, vividness of ideas, feelings and distinctive characters significantly contributed to the development of Azerbaijani literature of the 20th century. The scholarly studies on the writings of Rasul Rza and the school mainly analysed the themes, imagery, and ideological aspects of their poetry. They noted the important role of the school in shaping national consciousness and modernising Azerbaijani literature. The results of all these studies are consistent with the results of the present study in that the departure from traditional canons allowed the creation of a unique poetic style in the literary discourse of Azerbaijan.

The analysis of linguistic and stylistic features described the mechanisms of creating a poetic text in greater detail and identified the unique features of the studied literary school. The study established that the rhythmic possibilities of ordinary spoken language in poetic texts have created an opportunity for the expression of poetic feelings in the authors' artistic intentions. N. Quliyeva [2021] noted that the craftsmanship is distinguished by playfulness and subtle lyricism based on a universal language. Thus, the study proves that the Azerbaijani poetic language has been enriched by acquiring polyphony and colourful colloquial vocabulary. The results of the present study confirm the innovative nature of Rasul Rza's poetic school. In particular, the experiments with verse form, vocabulary and syntax, created a unique poetic style using colloquial vocabulary, giving it greater expressiveness and authenticity.

The present study established that one of the important techniques for creating new lyrical and associative works was the use of monosyllables in stanzas, artistic repetition, and double repetition of words and expressions to give a new shade to artistic ideas and content in the literary school of Rasul Rza. With the help of these linguistic means, invisible layers and shades of the word are revealed, and the description in poetic texts is visualised. According to a study by J.T. Welsch [2020], the poetic devices used in poetry, including alliteration (repeated consonant sounds) and assonance (repeated vowel sounds), enhance the enjoyment and understanding of poetry by arranging words to achieve certain effects. The researcher noted that although most poetry is read silently, it should still have the feeling of being spoken aloud, and the reader should practice "listening" to it to capture the skill with which the poet has created the work. Therefore, authors use words or parts of words that can be grouped or placed side by side to achieve a melodic effect.

A.A. Moghadesi and S.P. Hosain [2017] stated that repetition in poetry increases the emphasis on the important, emphasising aspects of the poet's message with sound effects. The results of the above studies and the present study coincide with the use of single onset, repetition, repetition to create a sound effect.

Another important finding of the study was the identification of distinctive features in the use of artistic means such as epithets, similes, and metaphors by Rasul Rza's poetic school. Unlike the conventional figurative language typical of earlier Azerbaijani poetry, these stylistic devices exhibit a marked influence of European modernist movements, particularly expressionism and imagism, characterized by intensified emotional expression, vivid imagery, and symbolic ambiguity. The poets employed these means not merely as decorative elements but as integral tools to explore complex themes and moods, thereby contributing to the school's innovative poetic language and its departure from traditional poetic conventions. For example, in Rasul Rza's poem *Taniş qala* [*Familiar Fortress*], the metaphor "*süngüləri darağın qalın dişləri kimi olan düşmən*" [*the enemy with bayonets like the thick teeth of a comb*] offers a jarring, unconventional comparison, replacing

heroic grandeur with an everyday, even banal, image. This choice enhances the grotesque impression of violence and dehumanisation, reflecting expressionist aesthetics. Similarly, in the poem *Küçəmin adı* [*The Name of Our Street*], the street is described as “*dalan*” (alley), not in terms of physical geography but as a metaphor for marginalisation, anonymity, and overlooked existence. The epithets “*qəmli küçə*” [“sad street”] and “*səkiləri əynəmli*” [“sidewalks like worn clothes”] fuse emotional and visual registers, intensifying the mood of nostalgia and sorrow.

Ali Karim’s *Muğəmi dinləmək* [*Listening to Mugham*] includes the metaphor “*Bir tərəfi Ruhum dumanlı / Bir yanı buz kimi soyuq*” [“One side my soul is foggy / One side is as cold as ice”], which symbolically captures emotional dissonance and inner fragmentation, echoing imagist principles through precise, sensory-loaded images. Likewise, in Alekbar Salahzade’s *Fəvvarə* [*Fountain*], water becomes a metaphor for poetic inspiration and vitality, described through striking similes: “*şüşə-şüşə səmaya parıldayır*” [“glass by glass it shines to the sky”], and “*bir boşqab yatan su ayağa qalxdı*” [“a plate of sleeping water rose”]. These images abandon traditional pastoral beauty in favour of surreal, animated, and layered visions that merge the mechanical and organic, the static and the dynamic. Finally, Ramiz Rovshan’s *Taniyir* [*He Knows*] offers a metaphysical simile in “*Mən ayrı quşam... Yarı bülbul, yarı bayquş*” [“I am a different bird... Half nightingale, half owl”], conveying the dual nature of poetic identity: torn between beauty and wisdom, day and night, lyricism and existential solitude. This duality exemplifies the school’s departure from clear-cut symbols toward ambiguous, introspective figurative language. Through such imagery, the school of Rasul Rza not only modernised Azerbaijani poetic expression but also aligned it with international modernist poetics, using metaphor and simile as cognitive and emotional instruments rather than ornamental figures.

The study established that the authors often resorted to poetic metaphors, and drew analogies with a simple, ordinary object that is different in nature from the object of comparison. Such poetic verbal finds were systematic in the literary school of Rasul Rza. The study by C. Rasse et al. [2020] was based on the importance of artistic means, in particular metaphors as a means of emotional impact in poetic texts. The researchers noted that readers turn to conceptual metaphors when interpreting poetry. Accordingly, when the author uses metaphorisation of the text, the reader understands the meaning of this metaphorisation through the concepts with which the reader is already familiar.

P. Hetherington and C. Atherton [2020] investigated that metaphor in prose poetry enhances its complexity and allows various interpretations. The same position was expressed by J. Thwala [2019], who studied artistic devices in English poetry. The researcher noted that metaphor and simile are the main figures of speech that demonstrate emotional value, connotative meaning, literary value, and linguistic skills in poetry. W. Deng et al. [2024], studying the peculiarities of artistic devices in the poetry of the 21st century, noted that analysis of the mechanisms of metaphors in contemporary poetry with examples in detail, i.e., mixing, reflection, frameshift, image scheme, conceptual integration, contextual justification, intersubjectivity, embodied cognition, recursiveness, juxtaposition, form formation, can improve the analysis of poetry in general.

Investigating the differential effects of similes and metaphors in general, C. Kao [2021] determined that similes are more effective than metaphors. Similes combined with typical placement, especially in the context of new word pairs, led to better creativity development than combinations with metaphors.

Thus, the conclusions of C. Rasse et al. [2020], P. Hetherington and C. Atherton [2020], and J. Thwala [2019] correspond to the results of the current study that metaphor is a key to emotional impact in poetic texts. However, the results of our study on the role of metaphors contradict the findings of W. Deng et al. [2024] and C. Kao [2021], who noted the superiority of simile over metaphor.

We identified the syntactic side of the poetic style of writing of representatives of the literary school of Rasul Rza as brevity, flexibility of the word, strong laconicism in the expression of poetic thought, and specific expression of thought, which is realised mainly by noun clauses. In addition, such brevity arose from the phenomenon of associative imagery in the philosophical

and intellectual poetry of this poetic school, as opposed to other literary schools, that is, it was required by the process of conveying an idea in a text through associations. According to the study by Z. Korzhak [2022], nominative sentences enhance the expressiveness of literary texts, as well as being concise, brief and integrated with other sentences. Accordingly, such sentences have an impact on enhancing expressiveness. Therefore, the results of the study and the conclusions of the researcher coincide in terms of the importance of laconicism and nominative sentences in literary speech.

This study also analysed the use of experiments with rhythm and intonation. The study determined that the poets of Rasul Rza's school actively used these techniques to create vivid images, convey complex emotions and reflect contemporary reality. The study proved that the rhythm in the literary school of Rasul Rza, mainly from the very process of creating a poetic text, arose from an artistic need, and the traditional system of rhymes that frames the artistic idea constrained it and suppressed the freedom of poetic imagination. Exploring the peculiarities of free verse metrics on the example of Arabic literature, M. Almohawes [2024] indicated that poets used free verse as it provided more freedom to express their thoughts, use their style of musical rhythms, different rhythms and meters that correspond to their emotions and themes, and best express the poetic experiences of the author. Therefore, measured freedom, unexpected rhymes and unrhymes, which are characteristic of poets, are a factor of freedom of artistic form. J. Crone [2023] notes that rhythm in free verse creates an information-rich, multi-level, context-dependent semantic system through linguistic accents, intonation, and other paralinguistic features. Thus, J. Crone [2023] and M. Almohawes [2024] confirmed the thesis that free verse simplifies the rules of metre, which is consistent with the results of the study on the diversity of rhythmic means of the blank verse.

Thus, the innovative style of Azerbaijani poetry departed from the traditional canons and experimented with form, vocabulary and syntax. The use of colloquial vocabulary enriched the poetic language, giving it expressiveness, and the use of stylistic devices such as single-entendre, repetition and metaphors contributed to the creation of sound effects and the disclosure of new shades of the word. The analysis of syntactic features has demonstrated that laconicism, brevity and the use of nominal clauses enhance the expressiveness of artistic speech, while experiments with rhythm and intonation allowed poets to express complex emotions and reflect their reality.

Conclusions

The study analysed the writing style of the representatives of the poetic school founded by Rasul Rza, focusing on Alekbar Salahadze and Ramiz Rovshan. The poets addressed urban, landscape, and philosophical themes. The concept of free verse was explored, showing its flexibility and freedom from formal frameworks. This form, influenced by European modernism, allows for a more personal and expressive poetic language. The study revealed the systematic use of rhythmic devices such as colloquial tone, anaphora, repetition, syntactic parallelism, and brevity, techniques also found in European expressionist and imagist poetry. These devices allowed the poets to express a range of emotions and bring poetry closer to everyday life, reflecting the desire to modernise Azerbaijani literature. The poets also frequently used metaphors, epithets, and similes, which transformed everyday images into deeper, more complex meanings.

Rasul Rza's school experimented with language, using colloquial vocabulary and breaking syntactic norms, allowing for more dynamic and fluid expressions. Symbolic images in the poetry often carried hidden meanings, aligning with the symbolic practices of European modernist poets. By modernising vocabulary and embracing free verse, the school brought literature closer to the reader and contributed to establishing national identity, influenced by European trends in expression and form.

A comparison of traditional and innovative Azerbaijani poetry showed a shift from classical forms like ghazal and qasidah to European modernist styles, with an emphasis on thematic expansion and colloquial vocabulary. This school's innovations were promoted internationally through translations, literary readings, and academic events, broadening the recognition of Azerbaijani literature in the global context. Further research should focus on comparative studies with other modernist groups and a deeper analysis of the school's lexical and stylistic features.

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STYLISTIC INNOVATION AND MODERNIST TENDENCIES IN THE POETIC SCHOOL OF RASUL RZA

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The purpose of the study is to determine the artistic and stylistic innovations in Rasul Rza's poetic style, with particular attention to his adoption of free verse, engagement with modernist aesthetics, and the broader literary significance of these developments within Azerbaijani poetry. The research has employed methods of stylistic and comparative analysis of selected poems by Rasul Rza and key representatives of his literary school to identify genre features, linguistic innovations, and deviations from traditional poetic forms in Azerbaijani literature. Focusing on the works of four central figures, Rasul Rza, Alekbar Salahzade, Ali Karim, and Ramiz Rovshan, the research analyses their poetic output to highlight the transformation of poetic form, language, and thematic concerns that distinguished this school from traditional Azerbaijani poetry. The representatives of Rasul Rza's literary school consciously moved away from classical poetic genres such as the ghazal and qasidah, embracing European-influenced free verse, which offered freedom from fixed rhyme schemes and metrical patterns. This liberation enabled poets to explore novel rhythmic structures, intonations, and sound patterns that contributed to a more flexible and expressive poetic language. The study reveals that the school's poetry encompasses a broad spectrum of themes including urban life, nature, and profound philosophical reflections, thereby broadening the thematic scope of Azerbaijani literature. Stylistically, the poets employed colloquial vocabulary and various rhetorical devices such as anaphora, epiphora, and syntactic parallelism to intensify emotional resonance and enhance musicality. A notable feature is the frequent use of short, laconic, and nominative sentences that impart dynamism and immediacy to the verse, reflecting the rapid pace and fragmented reality of modern existence. The research situates Rasul Rza's school within the broader context of global modernism, demonstrating how it synthesized national poetic traditions with international avant-garde trends. This fusion contributed to the emergence of a uniquely Azerbaijani modernist poetic identity that resonated with intellectual and aesthetic currents worldwide. The findings underscore the school's role in revitalizing Azerbaijani poetry by dismantling rigid formal constraints, expanding thematic boundaries, and integrating a conversational tone that made poetry more accessible and socially relevant. Through these innovations, the Rasul Rza school contributed to the development of intellectual poetry in Azerbaijan,

characterized by philosophical depth, linguistic experimentation, and stylistic freedom. This study offers valuable contributions to literary history, stylistics, and theory by elucidating the processes of poetic modernization and the evolution of literary forms in Azerbaijan. The study affirms that Rasul Rza's poetic school remains a cornerstone of Azerbaijani literary modernization, bridging the gap between national tradition and global literary innovation, and shaping the future directions of Azerbaijani poetry.

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