THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLICIST STYLE IN THE NATIONAL PRESS OF THE AZERBAIJAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (1918-1920)

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Abstract. *The establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) served as a critical turning point in the evolution of the Azerbaijani literary language and the systematization of its functional styles. Despite its brief 23-month existence, the ADR era fostered a dynamic linguistic environment where the national press acted as a primary regulator for stylistic differentiation. This paper examines the development of the journalistic (publicist) style, which emerged as a powerful tool for state-building, national ideology, and public enlightenment.*

The study categorizes the press langauage of this period into three primary directions: ***socio-political****,* ***scientific-journalistic****, and* ***literary-journalistic*** *styles. Through the analysis of prominent periodicals such as Istiqlal, Azerbaijan, Sheypur, and Maktab, the research highlights how these styles balanced classical traditions with modern requirements. Key findings indicate that socio-political journalism utilized a blend of political terminology and emotional rhetoric to mobilize the masses, while scientific journalism focused on an enlightenment mission by simplifying complex data for a broader audience. Furthermore, the satirical press enriched the literary-journalistic style by integrating colloquial speech and sharp irony. Ultimately, the ADR press laid a firm foundation for the modernization of the Azerbaijani language and its elevation to official state status.*

Keywords: *Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, National Press, Publicist Style, Literary Language, Socio-Political style, Literary-journalistic style.*

The establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918–1920) was not only a turning point in the history of our national statehood but also constituted an exceptional stage in the development of the Azerbaijani literary language and the systematization of its functional styles. With the proclamation of the Republic, radical reforms carried out in the fields of state administration, education, culture, and, most importantly, the press created favorable conditions for the expansion of the social function of the mother tongue. The diversity of newspapers and magazines published during the ADR period, in terms of both content and form, provided a major impetus for the rapid development of functional styles.

The linguistic environment of this period was characterized by its diversity in terms of its scope of use and application. The classical Arabic-Persian poetic and official language traditions and the strong lexical-morphological influence of Ottoman Turkish, coexisted with the official-administrative language templates inherited from the Tsarist Russian era on the pages of the press within the same timeframe. In such a complex phonetic, lexical, and syntactic environment, the national press played the role of a regulator of the literary language and served as the primary tribune ensuring the differentiation (separation) of styles.

Naturally, when discussing the functional styles of this period, we must first note the journalistic (publicist) style. In the Republican era, besides being a medium for mass media, the

journalistic style aimed to enlighten the public, instill state ideology, and shape a national identity.

The press language of this period manifested itself mainly in three directions: socio-political journalistic language (sometimes called official-journalistic language), scientific-journalistic language, and literary-journalistic language. Each direction was shaped according to the profile of the press, its target audience, and the individual stylistic characteristics of the authors.

Socio-Political Journalistic Language and the Promotion of National Ideology

The official-journalistic language is sometimes referred to as socio-political journalistic language. This language mainly encompassed the publications of certain political parties and official state institutions of the period, reflecting their political ideologies, official documents, and principles of national ideology. Socio-political journalists approached their language with great demands and paid special attention to every word in order to attract attention, enlighten the public. As an example of the official-political journalistic language, we can point to the declaration addressed by the "Musavat" party to Muslim workers intending to strike, published in issue 27 of the newspaper *Istiqlal* in 1919:

“*Millətdaşlar, yoldaşlar! Sizi ayın 14-ndə bir günlük zabastovkaya çağırıyorlar. Sizə diyorlar ki gəlin “Denikin qorxusu”na karşı protest edək! Anladırlar ki Azərbaycan istiqlalı qorxudadır. Bəli yoldaşlar doğrudur vətəndaşlar! Mövqeyimiz çox nazik. Məmləkətimizin qorxusu çox böyükdür. Hamımız bir adam kimi hürriyyətimizi müdafiəyə hazır olmalıyq. Fəqət bizi bu tətilə kim çağırmalı və kimin sözünə baxaraq istiqlalımızın müdafiəsinə lazım olan hərəkəti etməliyik! Azərbaycan fikrinin xadimlərinəmi yoxsa istiqlalımızın düşmənlərinəmi qulaq asmalıyq?! Yoldaşlar, diqqət ediniz! Sizi zabastovkaya çağıran nə parlaman nə hökumət nə də Azərbaycan fikrinin anası “Müsavat”dır. Sizi küçəyə çıxartdırmaq istəyən və sizin adınızla öz istədiyini etmək qəsdində olan “konferensiya”dır. Bu “konferensiya” ha vaxtdan istiqlalçı ha vaxtdan azərbaycançı oldu*?!” [4, p. 4]

As can be seen, while political terminology such as *zabastovka* (strike), *protest*, *istiqlal* (independence), *hurriyyat* (liberty), *parlaman* (parliament), "Musavat", and *konferensiya* (conference) predominates, metaphorical expressions like *Azərbaycan fikrinin anası* (the mother of Azerbaijani intellect), and *Denikin qorxusu* (the Denikin menace) are also encountered to heighten emotional resonance.

In scientific literature, a crucial characteristic of the journalistic style is shown to be a synthesis of two core linguistic functions: the communicative (informative) and the expressive (affective) functions. "In this style, the author does not limit themselves to transmitting information to the audience, but simultaneously expresses their attitude toward these facts" [9, p. 36].

In the text of the declaration, synonyms of national origin such as *yoldaslar* (comrades), *milletdaslar* (compatriots), and *vatandaslar* (citizens), as well as parallelisms like *zabastovka-tatil* (strike), were used as forms of address. Despite the use of words of Russian-European origin like *zabastovka*, *protest*, and *konferensiya*, the text is generally comprehensible. Since the declaration was addressed to workers, every worker employed in the mines, factories, and plants at that time understood the meaning of these terms. Furthermore, the pronoun *ha* (havaxtdan) – which in our modern language is preserved mostly in spoken language was used in place of the interrogative pronoun *nə* (when/what). H. Mirzazade notes that the pronoun *ha* is encountered in

the language of 19th-century literary and artistic works and was mostly used in our language as a synonym for the pronoun *nə* [7, p. 187].

During the period of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, figures such as M. A. Rasulzade, M. B. Mammadzade, U. Hajibeyli, H. I. Gasimov, F. Aghazade, M. A. Sidgi, O. F. Nemanzade, and others published socio-political journalistic articles in national press. The promotion of national ideas, the internal and foreign policy of the state, and the socio-political problems of the era were highlighted by these authors in newspapers such as *Azerbaijan*, *Istiqlal*, and *Basirat*, as well as in magazines like *Qurtulus*, *Sheypur*, and *Afkari-mutaallimin*.

The Development of the Scientific-Journalistic Style and Its Enlightenment Mission

The development of scientific-journalistic language within the press style of the Republican period can be traced across various media outlets. N. Khudiyev writes that "the emergence of specimens of scientific language at the beginning of the 20th century means, above all, that the press did not remain solely a vehicle for political or artistic thought, but at the same time became one of the main tools for the expression and dissemination of scientific thought" [3, p. 590].

Scientific-journalistic language is primarily the language of periodicals/magazines. In this language, purely scientific data and research documents are presented to the reader by being adapted into a popularly accessible form. Although it is not always easy to differentiate scientific-journalistic language from a purely scientific style, certain syntactic and functional boundaries do exist. The following passage taken from N. Yusifbeyli's article titled "To the Youth of Azerbaijan" is a manifestation of scientific-journalistic language (the journalistic style) rather than a purely scientific style:

“*Varsın, düşünsünlər. İstədikləri kimi düşünsünlər. Yalnız söyləməsinlər. Söylərlər isə tariximizi vərəqlərəm və bir çox göz çıxaracaq barmaqlar bularam. Ta əski zamanlardan başlaram... Miladi-İsadan 530 sənə əvvəl sənin vətənin olan Qafqaziyada böyük müharibə və qələbədən sonra kainatın ən böyük qan tökücülərindən məşhur Keyxosrovun başını kəndi əliylə kəsib, qanla dolu bir qabın içərisinə atıb, “Ömrün olalı qan içməkdən doymadın, şimdi doy” deyən böyük türk qadın qaanlarından Tomris qaanı göstərərəm. Miladdan 310 sənə müqəddəm məşhur səddi-Çini aşıb Çinin yarısını yedi-istilasına keçirən türk Tumas qaanı göstərərəm...*” [1, p. 48]

While the most crucial feature reminiscent of a scientific style here is the scientific terminology, the journalistic style manifests itself as a whole in the content, form, and function of the text. The function of the terminology used in scientific-journalistic language differs directly from its function in a purely scientific style. To substantiate his point in this article, N. Yusifbeyli appeals to history and maintains a scientific framework by using terminology such as *qaan* (khagan), *saddi-Chin* (Great Wall of China), *muqaddam* (prior to/before), and *Miladi-Isa* (Anno Domini/after Christ), and by mentioning the names of historical figures like Tomris, Tumas, and Keyxosrov (Cyrus). On the other hand, to enhance the impact of the article, he strengthens emotional and literary qualities with expressions like *göz çıxaracaq barmaqlar bularam* (I shall find fingers that will poke out eyes) or *ömrün olalı qan içməkdən doymadın, şimdi doy* (In all your life you were never sated with drinking blood; now gorging yourself!).

"This branch of the journalistic style deals with scientific, historical-cultural, and daily domestic matters. The clarity or complexity of the language of such writings depends on the media’s language policy and individual authors' attitudes toward the existing language policy,

namely their reliance on the mother tongue versus their inclination toward foreign material. Therefore, scientific-journalistic language sometimes appears very simple" [2, p. 54].

T. Hajiyev associates the simplicity of scientific-journalistic language with its publication in newspapers and magazines, including the children's press [2, p. 57]. During the ADR period, articles on biology, geography, and history written at the level of textbooks were published in magazines such as *Maktab* and *Afkari-mutaallimin*. For instance, in the article "The Ostrich" by the teacher Jamobey in *Maktab* magazine (1918, No. 3), units of measurement like *fut* (foot) and *girvanka* (a traditional unit of weight) were used, and colloquial phraseology like "whenever their hearts desire" was used to simplify the language [5, p. 13]. The "Geography Lessons" published in the first issue of the *Maktab* magazine in 1920 is similarly rich in simple geographical toponyms and terms: *"**Afrika Avropanın** cənubunda böyük bir **qaredir**... Zəncinin cildi qayət siyahdır. Az siyah olanlara **həbəşi** deyirlər"* (Africa is a large continent to the south of Europe... The skin of the Negro is extremely black. Those who are less black are called Abyssinians. [6, p. 13].

Literary-Journalistic Language and Figurative Expression in the Satirical Press

During the Republican period, the literary-journalistic branch of the journalistic style was also developing rapidly. This style includes the linguistic and stylistic features of writers' figurative journalism, which manifested itself mainly in the satirical press—in journals like *Sheypur* and *Zanbur*.

Literary journalism possesses highly diverse genre capabilities, which also include journalism written in the form of letters. Let us look at a passage from "From a Sealed Letter," written under the pseudonym Haji Leylak in issue 13 of *Sheypur* magazine in 1919:

"*Müdiri-möhtərəm! ...A canım, mən bir fağır babayam, mənim jurnal-murnaldan başım çıxmaz. Mən yazmaq bilsəm, qızılağaclıların aşura axşamı qız oğurlamaqlarını yazaram. Mən yazan olsam, kəndin qırağındakı evin əhvalatını yazaram... O qədər yazmalı şeylər var ki, mən hansını yazmışam ki, onları yazım ....*" [8, p. 6].

N. Khudiyev notes that "the form of address (the letter) brings the language of the text closer to oral speech, making it livelier and more impactful. It becomes a kind of 'candid conversation' about the matter" [3, p. 588]. T. Hajiyev points to sharp irony, an abundance of colloquial words belonging to popular speech, and syntactic freedom as specific features of this form [2, p. 53].

The literary-journalistic language was also enriched by adding satirical anecdotes and *Molla Nasraddin*-type texts in the children's press. In an anecdote by Ali Ashraf Hasanzade in *Maktab* magazine (1918, No. 3), the syntax of living spoken language is fully preserved: *"Ona şükr eliyoram ki, eşşək üstündə deyil imişəm, yoxsa indi mən də itmişdim"* (I thank God that I was not on the donkey, otherwise I would be lost by now too") [5, p.14].

"Figurative expression in literary-journalistic language manifests itself at various levels—from individual words and expressions to syntax and text structure, indicators of figurativeness become factualized, thereby bringing literary artistry (mainly on a satirical plane) to the journalistic style of the period" [2, p. 589].

The national press of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic period played a vital role in the development of functional styles. Despite the short timeframe (23 months), these press organs transformed socio-political journalism into a tool for mass influence, raised the enlightenment mission to the level of textbooks and journals through scientific-journalistic language, and introduced literary artistry into press styles via literary-journalistic language. The press language

of this period both preserved classical traditions and established a firm foundation for the subsequent decades toward the modernization of the literary language and its acquisition of official state status.

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