

Stylistic devices in G. I. Nwaozuzu's Ome Ihe Jide Ofo

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ARTICLE INFO	Abstract
Keywords: <i>Drama, devices, linguistics, internet, playwright</i> ©2025 Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International 	<i>The study focuses on stylistic devices used by playwrights in Igbo drama. The objective of the study was to identify the linguistic and non-linguistic devices used by G. I. Nwaozuzu in Ome ihe jide Ofo. The research design used was descriptive survey. Document observation of text related to the subject matter was used to retrieve the primary data for analysis. Secondary data was sourced through the internet and other sources. Expert purposive sampling technique was used to select Ome ihe jide ofo for the study. The study shows that the playwright used linguistic devices like repetition and non-linguistic devices like the structure of the play to beautify his artistic work and effectively communicate his theme to the audience. The study is significant because it will make the text easy and more understandable to readers. The study concluded that the use of stylistic devices makes artistic work more powerful, activating, inviting and beautiful. It recommends that the playwrights should master stylistic devices and incorporate them in their writing to make their artistic unique and more interesting.</i>

1. Introduction

Aristotle points out the six elements of drama in their order of prominence: plot, character, thought, diction, music, and spectacle. Nwabueze (2011) maintains that these characteristics coming together to reveal the unique meaning of a play.

Diction is the choice of word or the language of the play. Language creates the dramatic world of the play. Since dramatic diction operates mainly through dialogue, it constitutes the means through which the play's plot is advanced and through which dramatic character is depicted (Nwabueze, 2011). A playwright therefore chooses his own words and uses his own unique style to write in different ways that is suitable to the playwright using a lot of dialogues blended with stylistic devices that are both clear and appropriate to communicate and convey his meaningful ideas to his audience or readers.

Style is a writer's characteristic way of saying things. Other components of style grow out of a writer's diction (choice of words), imagery, syntax/variety, and organizational structure among others. One cannot discuss style significantly without discussing language – that is the diction, the choice of words of a writer. A writer could choose to be simple, obscure or subtle in between depending on his targeted audience or readers. Whatever the choice, however, an author's diction needs to be both clear and appropriate to satisfy his aesthetic needs and communicate and convey his meaning to his readers or audience (Nwabueze, 2011).

While language is the choice of words, style involves both figurative language and other forms which a writer adopted to make his/her work interesting, peculiar, more effective and attractive. Literary artists employ language to express ideas, convey meaning and also highlight important themes in their artistic works. Stylistic devices are classified into linguistic and non-linguistic devices.

Lekin (2015) asserts that writing would be plain and shallow without figurative language. She lists the following 31 stylistic devices (figurative elements): adnomination, allegory, alliteration, allusion, anaphora (epiphoras), antithesis, apostrophe, assonance (consonance), cataphora, climax (anticlimax), charactonym, ellipsis, euphemism, irony, merism, metalepsis, metaphor, metonymy,

onomatopoeia, oxymoron, parallelism (chiasmus), paranthesis, personification, pun, rhetorical question, simile, synecdoche, tautology and zeugma.

Research Methodology

Research design

The study employed a descriptive survey design. It is used to gather data about varying subjects to know the extent to which different conditions can be obtained among these subjects (Zumuehlin, 1981). Descriptive survey according to Ali (2006) and Nworgu (2015) is concerned with the collection and description of data from a given population in a systematic way. The design is appropriate for the study since it is concerned with collection, description and interpretation of data.

Sample and sampling technique

The sample for this study was made up of four Igbo plays selected purposively from the contemporary Igbo drama written from 1974 to 2002. Expert sampling as one of the purposive sampling techniques is more appropriate for the study. Expert sampling is a form of purposive sampling used when research requires one to capture knowledge rooted in a particular form of expertise (Patton, 2002). This will enable the researcher to collect information about Igbo ethical violation and punishment in the Igbo plays, as well as facts and points relevant to the study.

Method of data collection

The primary data for the study were collected through document observation or intent reading of texts related to the topic under study for the retrieval of the primary data or corpus for the analysis. Secondary data were sourced from electronically-stored materials and from other literary materials like journals, research papers, seminar papers and relevant conference papers.

Method of data analysis

The primary data collected through intent reading of the selected text was analysed paying proper attention to the contribution of the style to the atmosphere of the play. Choice of words were considered. Other stylistic devices like metaphors, similes,, structure of the play, etc were identified and analysed.

Textural Analysis

The stylistic devices or figurative elements identified in the study are grouped into linguistic and non-linguistic devices. The linguistic devices identified in the present study were classified into three groups: figures of speech (rhetoric question, repetition, parallelism, exhortation and apostrophe), figures of thought (proverb, personification, metaphor, metonymy, euphemism, hyperbole, simile, synecdoche, idiom, wellerism, allusion, irony, antithesis), figures of sound (alliteration and assonance). Non-linguistic stylistic devices that were identified in this study are: the structure of the plays, symbol and symbolism, adaptation from other great works, use of dreams/ominous signs, use of prediction/prophesy, use of spiritual transcendence (use of native doctors, ritual), exile/movement, use of confession and use of letter writing

Linguistic devices

Linguistic devices are words, utterances or expressions that convey a meaning different from the literal one. A literary artist uses words as building block in forming out his style. He uses his description in choosing words (diction) that will be very accurate and appropriate in his type of writing in order to make his message clear and better for people to understand and appreciate his work. Playwrights of the selected plays made use of language in various forms to beautify their plays.

The figurative elements in the study are grouped into figures of speech, figures of thought, figures of sound and diction.

Figures of speech

In literature, words are used in unusual manner for special effects, such as lending vividness or heightening the beauty of style (Nnabuihe, 2010). In the selected contemporary Igbo plays for this very study, there are various uses of language which “deviate from literal language which are meant to provide new literal language, provide new effects or fresh insights into the themes being discussed” (Nnabuihe, 2010:243).

A figure of speech is a deviation from the ordinary use of words in order to increase its effectiveness. It is also known as a rhetorical figure because it produces a rhetorical effect. It deviates a statement from its real meaning or common usage to create a new required effect. It usually emphasises, embellishes or clarifies language in both written and oral form (Vedantu, n.d). They are devices or utterances that have no deep meaning or deep structure different from a surface structure of the utterances or devices.

Rhetorical question

Rhetorical question refers to question that does not necessarily demand an answer. According to Nnabuihe (2010:259), it is “a question put forward in an argument, conversation or dialogue to create effect, enhance emotion, elicit sympathy and to lay emphasis.”

Nwaozuzu (1991) used rhetorical question in *OIJQ*.

Ubaji: Nna m ọ bụgini ka i na-achọikwuihe a? Ọ ga-abuna m ga-abuzi nwaenweghi nne enweghi nna, ebeogbo m ka na-anoodun'apataukwunnaha (page 5, emumenkeabuo, nkejimbui).	My father what are you trying to say? Does it mean that I will be an orphan when my mates are still being pampered by their father (page 5, Act two, scene one).
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Ubaji asked this question without requiring any answer. He only expressed his emotion by understanding the implication of the Will made by his father, Oduenyi before the ozọ titled men and elders of Umudem. Ochediye eaves-dropped and heard everything about the Will and that is the cause of violation of kingship succession ethics in the play. Ochediye, DuruNnanyereugo and Nkwonta disregarded the Will of IgweOduenyi about his thrown thereby violating the kingship principles. The Will is for due process to be observed.

Figures of thought

In rhetoric, a figure of thought is a figurative expression that depends less on the choice or arrangement of words for its effect than on the meaning(s) conveyed (Nordquist, 2019). Figures of thought have deep meaning different from the devices, medium or utterances used in expressing them.

Proverbs

Proverb according to Holman (1960:42) is a sentence or phrase which briefly and strikingly expresses some recognized truth or shrewd observation about practical life and which has been preserved through oral tradition. Proverbs according to Abrams and Harpham (2005:8) are ‘short, pithy statements of widely accepted truths about everyday life’. Proverbs are popular but short sayings that contain wisdom and warning (Meludu, 2014). It is also expressed and transmitted in written literature. Proverbs are used by writers to enrich language or style and also for purposes of clarity, enforcement and embellishment of their works.

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of proverb cluster in her play, *OIJQ*. Alaagbaoso used the following proverb cluster in communicating with Durulhuoma while performing the ritual for

breaking of kola during Ihuoma's visit to him at Amaure. He is using the ritual for kola to advocate for justice in the society.

Alaagba: Ọ-hurū-m-na-ebe, anyammiri akola He who sees me and starts weeping, tears will
ya n'anya. Ọ chorọmma hụmma, ọ chorọ njo not cease from his eyes. He who destroys the
ya na njo zu. O gburuisi, isierulayan'aka. Egbe head (senior) seniority will elude him. Live
bere ugo bere nkesi ibeya ebela nku kwaaya and let live (page 56, act four, scene two).
(page 56, emumeano, nkejiabuo).

Personification

Personification is a figure of thought in which inanimate objects, ideas, abstractions, etc are endowed with human attributes or qualities. Nnabuihe (2010:249) defines personification as "a form of metaphor". In the use of personification according to him, "animals, ideas and lifeless objects are made to act like a person."

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of personification in her play, *OIJQ*.

Alaagba: Ala Amaure, lee oji, nye ala Amaure land, take kola and give to Umundem
Umundem (page 56, emumenkeano, land (page 56, act four, scene two)
nkejiabuo).

Alaagbaosomakes reference to Ala Amaure and AlaUmundem as if they are human beings. Alaagbaosọ is from Amaure while DuruIhuoma is from Umundem. He is seeking justice. Ala (land) is the dwelling place of the earth goddess. Alaagbaosọ uses that medium to present kola to Ihuoma as his visitor. The visit is in relation to Ubaji's mental health condition.

Metaphor

Abrams and Harpham (2005:102) defined metaphor as "a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing applied to distinctly different kinds of thing, without asserting a comparison." Ezugu (1998:58) sees metaphor as "a compressed simile which does not make use of "as" or "like". Nnabuihe (2010:243) sees metaphor as "a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable, in order to suggest a resemblance."

Nwaozuzu (1991) used metaphor in *OIJQ*. Ochediye sent for DuruNnanyereugo, DuruIhuoma and other elders the moment IgweQduenyi breathed his last breath. DuruIhuoma came and used some metaphors as praise names, praising the dead Igwe.

DuruIhu: (BidotuweIgwe aha) Igwe! O (Eulogises the king, Igwe! By calling or
sibiriagugokabirin'onu! E leljanwaite o addressing him with several names (page 10,
gbonyuokku! Igwe ka ala! Eke nweohia. A act one, scene two).
gbawo dike izuzu a gbaayaugboroabuo!
Ichenon'ulodduyana-ehoahia! (page 10,
emumembu, nkejiabuo).

The praise names are metaphorical and symbolizes what IgweQduenyi stood for or the characteristics he possessed.

Use of antithesis

Antithesis is a proposition that contrasts with or reverses some previously mentioned proposition or when two opposites are introduced together for contrasting effect. In informal argument in literature, the antithesis is the opposite of the thesis or the main ideas (Cambridge

University Press, 2021). It is the rhetorical contrast of ideas by means of words, clauses or sentences (Merriam-Webster, 2021). Antithesis simply means “opposite.” It is usually the opposite of statement, concept, or idea.

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of antithesis in her play, *OIJQ*.

Alaagba: ... Ee-ee! Ochediyega-
akpọputarandịohanwayan'Eke ha lee
ebenwanwaanyibeyanọburuonyearan'ih
iiheyabunwaanyi mere (page 59,
emumeano, nkejiabuo).

... Ee-ee! Ochediye will present her son to the
community at Eke for them to see while the
son of a woman like her remains as a mad
person through her evil acts (page 59, act four,
scene two).

Alaagba made this statement to show that it is not possible that Ochediye will successfully present her son, Nkwonta to Umundem community at Eke Umundem as a king while Ubaji remains as a mad person.

The structure of the play.

Dramatic structure is how the plot or story of a play is laid out, including a beginning, a middle and an end. The playwrights made use of *in medias res* in their plays. *In medias res* is a Latin phrase meaning “in the midst of things.” It is used as a literary term to describe when a story opens with the character already in the middle of things. This narrative technique captures the audience's or reader's attention, bringing them from centre into the play (Images, 2021). A narrative work beginning *in medias res* opens in the midst of the plot. Often, exposition is bypassed and filled in gradually, through dialogue, flashback or description of past events. Playwrights of the selected plays open their plays in the midst of the plot.

Nwaozuzu (1991) used *in medias res* in her play. The play opens with IgweOduenyi already spent his life as the king of Umundem. His pre-occupation is to get the elders of the community to make his Will about the future of his throne and that of his domain, Umundem. Oduenyi used this medium to make his intention about the continuity of his throne known to his elders and the ozọ titled men for good governance to continue.

Eze: Nwaigujeekepooro m okpara m,
ndiozo m nandichie (Ubajabata). Nwa
m ... o nwereihedokemkpa m choro ka
munagikwu. Ma tupu m kwuoiheahu,
achoro m ka ndiozonandichie m
norobebe a (page 1, emumembu,
nkejimbū).

Nwaigu, go and call my first son, my ozọ titled
men and my elders. (Ubaji comes in). My son,
there is an important issue I want to discuss
with you. But before I say it, I want my ozọ
titled men and my elders to be here (page 1, act
one, scene one).

In this way, the interest of the audience is maintained as one would be eager to know what he wants to discuss and the outcome of the discussion.

Symbol

In the opinion of Meerloo (1952:220) cited in Igbokwe (2013:25), “symbol refers to a material object having cultural significance and as well as the capacity to attract a response upon which interaction can be organised.” Symbol usually stands for or suggests something else by means of relationship, association or convention. This means that symbols are tangible and visible and they are culture specific as they are manufactured by man in his culture area to stand for and represent something different from the objects or materials being used or referred to.

A symbol is a communicative element intended to represent or stand for a complex entity such as person, object, group and idea (Obidiebube, 2011). It is a mark, sign, or word that indicates, or signifies or is understood as representing an idea, concept, object or relationship (Obidiebube, 2019). A symbol is a sign used to refer to meaning other than itself (Nnabuihe, 2010). Kanu cited in Okanume (2019:101) defines symbolic sign as “signs where the relationship between signifier and signified are purely conventional and culturally specific.” Symbols are figurative because they compare or merge two unlike objects or entities in an unlike manner.

In this study, symbol is cultural specific communicative element (person, object or idea) intended to communicate meaning other than itself. Literary artists frequently use symbols in order to include special meaning for special effect in creating their literary work. Symbolism is the representation of a concept through symbols or underlying meanings or objects or qualities (Obidiebube, 2011). Symbolism refers to the use of symbols in writing (Nnabuihe, 2010). Nwaozuzu (2007:44) classifies symbols into two broad groups: public or universal symbols and private or local symbols. Public or universal symbols are those symbols that are generally known all over the world (a dove is generally known as a symbol of peace). Private or local symbols are peculiar to a particular locality or area or culture (kola is a symbol of hospitality in Igbo culture).

In the selected play, *oji* (kola), *mmanya* (wine), *nzu* (kaolin) are symbolic. They represent goodwill among other things in Igbo culture that is why they are used in receiving visitors to show hospitality. They are also used for rituals. In Igbo culture, the first thing one presents to his/her visitors is kola to show hospitality and goodwill.

Nwaozuzu (1991) showcased symbol in her play, *OIIQ*. Ubaji's position as the first son of Chief Oduenyi is symbolic. He is the heir apparent to his father's throne. This position aroused greed and jealousy from Ochediye and she is motivated to use intrigue to convince the traditional prime minister, DuruNnanyereugo to join her in destroying Ubaji. The replacement of Ubaji with Nkwonta as the king of Umundem amounts to ethical violation and that is the cause of all that took place in the play. Nnanyereugo's position in Umundem is symbolic, that is why Ochediye made effort to use him in destroying Ubaji. DuruNnanyereugo violated the kingship ethics. Nwaozuzu also made use of archetypal symbols. Archetype means the most typical example of something, because it possesses all the desired qualities. Ubaji and Anyanwu are orphans, Ochediye is their cruel step-mother. An orphan is a symbol of maltreatment, suffering, hatred, etc. Step-mother is a symbol of cruelty to her step-children, always wanting the best treatment for her own children. This is the case between Ubaji, Anyanwu, Ochediye and Nkwonta in the play. Ochediye wanted Nkwonta to ascend their father's throne instead of Ubaji.

The playwright made use of Will as a symbol. IgweOduenyi's Will is a symbol of his authority on the succession of his position and how his properties will be shared and managed when he has joined his ancestors. His kingship stool or throne, cap, staff, hand fan, etc. are symbols and he made provision in his Will about who is to take over from him for peace, due process and good governance to continue in his kingdom. Disregarding a Will amounts to ethical violation. Ochediye tried to interrupt the process of good governance in Umundem by disregarding Oduenyi's Will, but failed and Ubaji was crowned king of Umundem by the elders. Durulhuoma performs the ceremony of handing over the throne to Ubaji.

DuruIhu:Ngwanu,
ndiichiebianukpuweyaokpuezennaya,
nyekwanuyamkparanamfeeze (page 71,
emumeano, nkejiise).

Come, the elders put his father's
crown on him, give him the staff and
the king's fan (page 71, act four, scene
five).

Costume is another symbol used by the playwright in the play. DuruNnanyereugo's costume marked him out as a great titled man. The medicine man identified him as a titled man through his dressing when he went to him with Ochediye to collect the poison they used to make Ûbaji mad

Dibja: ...Mgwaiyin'ahụegosila m na i ...Your costume has shown me that
bụghịoberemmadu.... (page 20, emumembu, you are not a small person (page 20, act
nkejiato). one, scene three).

Another instance of costume as a symbol in the play is during Durulhuoma's visit to Alaagba at Amaure.

Durulhu: Ọgọ m, i ma iheekike a m kereputara. My inlaw, you know the meaning of
Ọzọ m chiriabughin'onunkiti (page 55, this my costume. My ọzọ title is real
emumeano, nkejiabuo). (page 55, act four, scene two).

Durulhuoma made that statement to Alaagbaso during his visit to him at Amaure concerning Ûbaji. He wants Alaagbaso to trust him and his integrity as an ọzọ titled man and involve him in his plans about getting Ûbaji well again. The playwright showcased kola as a symbol used at different points in time in the play to show well-being and hospitality to visitors as the first thing before any discussion can go on.

Use of dreams and ominous signs

Nature has a way of communicating to human beings through signs, signals and symbols. Nwadike (1999b:59) informs that "doubts, fears, worries, disappointments, failures, etc. are readings from the barometer of the spirit, good in themselves to make us engage in the right gear and adjust to the right speed for the journey." Before the mishaps enumerated above get to us, the ominous gives a suggestion or warning about something bad that is about to happen.

Some playwrights make use of dreams in their creative works of art. In most plays in which dreams occur, they have predictive value. This means that dreams tend to warn us that some events we do not anticipate are going to take place. In this way, the audience or reader is prepared for a particular change or action in the play (Anagbogu, n.d.)

Closely related to the predictive value of dreams are the statements made by characters which are also predictive by their nature. The dramatic value of predictive statements lies in their ability to provide suspense in the play thereby sustaining interest of the audience or readers as the play progresses.

In their various drama texts, Igbo playwrights make use of "marked time period to get across certain actions ascribed to certain characters" according to Nnabuihe (2010:198). In some cases, natural phenomena like cloud, rain, thunder, lightning and sounds of ominous birds (like owl, *kukunkuo*) play significant roles. Sudden appearances of some creatures like python (in great number in one's compound, *edi* (civet), bees (in large number in one's compound) at unusual places and times are relevant. Igbo people believe that such unusual phenomena, more often than not, are indications or designs of danger.

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of ominous sign/wrong interpretation. The kola DibjaOkpanku presented to DuruNnanyereugo and Ochediye in his house fell on Ochediye's legs. This is a bad sign and the medicine man saw it as such and put aside the kola and brought another one. He turned to DuruNnanyereugo and tells him that their mission is not a good one.

Dibja: Ijeunabughiezigboije. Ihe m Your mission is not a good one. What I see
hurun'ojiahdaranwaanyi a ginaya so from the cola that fell on the legs of the

n'úkwúbùmmegide (page 22, emumeabụọ, nkejiatọ). woman with you is injustice (page 22, act two, scene three).

DuruNnanyereugo misinterpreted the signs and gave it a different meaning.

DuruNna: Eee? I hụziriyaaḥụzi. Ezigbommegide. I na-ahụzọenyi m (page 22, emumeabụọ, nkejiatọ). Eee? You saw it clearly. Great injustice. You see clearly my friend (page 22, act two, scene three).

Dibịa: ...Ehe-e kwuzie ihe i biara.

Duru Nna: (Kwagaa olu si.) Mgbe i kwuru na mbụ na ije anyị biara bụ ihe gbasara mmegide, ọ dị ka i banyere m n'obi. Ije anyị n'ezioḡwu gbasara mmegide. (Ọ ruo Ochediye aka.) Onye a i hụrụ ebe a bụ nwunye enyi m nwoke nwurụ anwụ. O nwere otu nwoke otu nne mụrụ ya na di ya. Nwoke a na-emegide ya na-achọ inapụ ya na otu mkpuru nwa o nwere ihe di ya niile. Ọ nweghi ụzọ nwoke a m na-agwa gi na-esighi achọ ka nwaanyị a na nwa ya nwuo ka o buru ihe nwaanyị a na di ya tara ahụhụ kpakọta. Ihe anyị biara ebe a bụ ka i meere anyị ihe anyị ga-eme nwoke ahụ ka aka buru ya nzu na mmanu. Ọ buru na anyị achoghi etu a ga-eme nwoke ahụ, nwaanyị a na nwa ya agaghi ezu ike n'ụwa a. (Pages 22-23, emume abuo, nkiri nke atọ).

Dibịa: ...Ehe-e begin to say why you come.

Duru Nna: (Clears his throat saying)

When you said at first that our mission is about injustice, it is as if you entered my mind. Our mission truly is about injustice (He points at Ochediye). This person you see here is my late friend's wife. She has a brother-in-law. This man is maltreating her trying to deprive her and her only son of all her husband's belongings. This very man tried all possible means to eliminate this woman and her child so as to possess everything herself and her husband worked for. The reason we are here is for you to help us to destroy the man's plans. If we do not look for how to handle this man, this woman and her son will not have rest on this earth (pages 22-23, act two, scene three)

The injustice *dibia* saw through the ominous sign about kola was injustice against *Ubaji* but *Duru Nnanyereugo* interpreted it to be injustice against Ochediye. The wrong interpretation given to the ominous sign furthers the plot of the play as it made the medicine man to continue the business with them. If he has got proper interpretation of the sign, he would have stopped his business with them. This is intentionally used by the playwright to further the plot of the play for a special effect to achieve her purpose of writing.

Use of prediction/prophecy

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of predictive statement/prophecy. IgweOduenyi made a predictive or prophetic statement in his Will against whoever that will work against his son, *Ubaji*.

Eze: Anya m ga-egheoghe. Onye ọ bulachororimegidēyan'uzona-ezighieziga-ahụ m n'etiehihie (page 6, emumembu, nkejimbū). My eyes will be open. Whoever wants to work against him (*Ubaji*) unjustly will see me in broad daylight (page 6, act one, scene one).

The prediction came to fulfillment when *DuruNnanyereugo*, Ochediye and *Nkwonta* conspired and disregarded IgweOduenyi's Will and made *Ubaji* mad and instituted *Nkwonta*

unlawfully on his father's throne. He appeared to Nkwonta physically on the day of his coronation as the king of Ụmụndem, dragging him out of the seat or throne.

Nkwonta: Lee nna m! Oleeebei du Ụbajina- See my father! Where are you leading Ụbaji to
abịa (page 63, emumeano, nkejiano). (page 63, act four, scene four).

The conspirators really saw IgweỌdụenyi in broad daylight and they died the same day as a result of their evil against Ụbaji.

Use of native doctors

Native doctors or *ndịdibịa* are known according to their specialty. *Dibịaagwu* according to Nwala (1985:69) is usually the one who:

Works specially under the direction and the influence of an *Agwu* which is an oracle that has the power of letting its owner get into hidden mysteries and develop faculties for divining the past, the present and the future. Usually, the possessed man combines the work of divination with the work of medical doctor.

Dibịaaja (Afa) is a type of native doctor that concentrates on the work of divination and also on performing sacrifices. *Dibịaohu* "are the seers who may also be palmists. They forecast future events and reveal people's destiny." They are usually wondering native doctors according to Nwala (1985:69).

There is another type of *dibịa* called *DibịaỌgalammụọ* according to Nwala (1985:70). Nwala avers that these are the *dibịa* who commune with the dead and the spirits. They can change forms, according to Igbo belief and they can go to the dead, commune with them, get message from them and receive special powers from them. Very often one sees such human beings walking around burial grounds with candles and other materials (in the modern time), very late in the night. *Dibịansị* prepares poison and other medicine for aggressive purposes. *Dibịaogwu* prepares medicines to heal and cure people of different sicknesses and diseases. *Dibịammiri* is the rain maker or the rain doctor (Nwala, 1985).

Igbo man goes to the appropriate doctor each time he is faced with challenges or misfortune. The native theory, according to Nwala (1985:232) "gives the man not only the mind to embrace his misfortune but the cure." The Igbo believe in all these and their lives and activities reflect them. The Igbo playwrights know about the different types of *dibịa* and incorporate them in creating their literary works of art.

Nwaozuzu (1991) showcased the theme of transcendence in her play, *OIJỌ*. Ochediye and IchieNnanyereugo had the need to do away with Ụbaji and install Nkwonta as king of Ụmụndem. They went to *dibịansị* and brought the medicine they used to make Ụbaji mad before the day of his coronation as the king of Ụmụndem. Nkwonta ran amok on the day of his coronation, he died while arrangement was being made for him to be taken to the medicine man. DuruNnanyereugo died at Ụmụome in the house of the native doctor treating him for a mysterious snake bite.

When Ụbaji became mad, his brother, Anyanwu took him to Amaure, their maternal home. This is in line with Igbo culture, *Ọsọchụbanwata be nnaya, ọ gbagaikwunneya* – If a child is being pursued from his paternal home, he runs to his maternal home. At Amaure, Alaagbaoso, his maternal uncle took him to a *dibịaafa* – diviner. The diviner revealed what happened to him and directed them to the same medicine man that prepared the poison for his conspirators that made him mad. He used the neutralizer to destroy the effect of the medicine and Ụbaji recovers.

Alaagba: ... Ihe m na-ekwubuna m jerena be ...What I am saying is that I went to a
dibịaafa, ọ gwa m naihena-emeỤbajisina be diviner and he told me that Ụbaji's

nnayanaumunnaya (page 48, emumeano, nkejimbù).

problem is from his family and from his kinsmen (page 48, act four, scene one).

Ritual

Ritual is a set of actions or words performed in a regular, often as part of a religious ceremony (Cambridge University Press, 2021). The spirits are involved in the day to day affairs of man. Ancestral spirits are the spirits of the dead ancestors who are still regarded and revered as part and parcel of the various communities in Igbo land (Nwala, 1985). Kola is a private or local symbol in Igbo culture and it is always accompanied by ritual each time it is presented to ask for favour and protection from the ancestors. The playwrights used kola for ritual. Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of kola for ritual in her play, *OIJQ*.

Eze: Ndị be anyiojiabiala. Nnaanyi ha leenuoji.
Onyenakeyaonyenankeya.
Onyeankwalaan'oduahianiozoburuaboya.
Ndina-echereanyibodotaanuji,
werekwanunyendi o ka agu. Onye ji ebeojihaa.
Egbughi m isi ma m buruisi....
Ndiogonaichienununu. Nwa m (o lee Ubajianya),
ndugi. Ihe a m ga-enyegi, ogegiuokwa i ga-
enyeyanwagi (page 3, emumembu, nkejimbù).

Our people kola has come. Our ancestors see kola. Possess your possession. Let no one be absent minded. Our protectors eat kola, take and give those that need it more. Let everyone be all right. I did not kill anybody at the top to come to the top....
Ndiogzo andichie, life to you all. My son, (he looks at Ubaji), life to you. What I am about to give you, when your time comes, you will give it to your child (page 3, act one, scene one).

Eze prayed with the kola and calls on the ancestors to come and partake of the kola and bless each one of them. He blessed his son Ubaji who is going to take over the mantle of leadership of Umundem from him. He expressed his wish for Ubaji to hand same over to his own child when the time comes. This is in line with the ethics of the Igbo people.

Exile and movement

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of movement in her play to further the plot for a special effect. Anyanwu moved Ubaji from Umundem to their maternal home, Amaure after he was made mad by Ochediye, DuruNnanyereugo and Nkwonta. The movement provided Ubaji the opportunity to recover. It also furthers the plot of the play. Anyanwu moved Ubaji from Umundem to Amaure thereby taking him from his trouble zone, to where he can receive solution. Alaagbaso took him to a diviner, and got revelation about what happened to him. Durulhuoma from Umundem and visited Ubaji in Alaagbaso's residence at Amaure. The visit enabled him to have an insight into what happened to Ubaji. The motive of his visit is to pledge his allegiance and support to Alaagbaso in getting Ubaji healed and also to unravel the cause of what happened to him. Alaagbaso had earlier on his visit to Umundem told them that Ubaji's problem is from his family and kinsmen. Durulhuoma's visit to Alaagba at Amaure further reveals to him that three people are responsible for Ubaji's ordeal.

Alaagba: ... Dibiaafagwara m na a
kurunwataaara ka o gharibueze. Dibiasirina aka
mmaduatoadin'imeihena-emeUbaji,
umunwokeabuonaotunwaanyi (page 57,
emumenkeano, nkejiabuo).

... A diviner told me that this child was made mad so that he will not become king. The diviner told me that three people have hand in what is happening to Ubaji, two males and a female (page 57, act four, scene two).

Durulhuoma went back to Umundem after they had perfected their plans on how to perform a ritual (as directed by the medicine man) at Eke Ama of Umundem in the night prior to the day of their gathering for the presentation of their new king. Alaagbaoso came down to Eke Ama Umundem to meet Durulhuoma. That night, they performed the ritual that helped to fish out the three conspirators.

Use of confession

Nwaozuzu (1991) made use of confession in *OIJQ*. DuruNnanyereugo was involved in ethical violation by conspiring with Ochediye and Nkwonta to make Ubaji mad. Before the death of DuruNnanyereugo, he confessed his evil deed against Ubaji.

Okorobia II: ... echetala m ihe onye
biazieanyiozibanyereonwu Duru
Nnanyereugo sirĩ na o jiri onya kwusiatupu o nwuo.
O sina o kpoğidere IgweOduenyiruonkubiumeya.
Iheikpeazu o sina o kwurutupu o kubieumebuna o
bukwaOchediyananwayadunyerayan'imeajoomumeya
mere (page 68, emumeano, nkejiano).

... I have remembered what the person
who came to inform us about
DuruNnanyereugo's death said that he
confessed before he died. He said that he
kept on calling IgweOduenyi till he died.
The last thing he said that he confessed
before he died is that it is Ochediye and
her child that led him into the evil he
committed (page 68, act four, scene
four).

Conclusion

The study concluded that style in drama is a playwright's characteristic way of saying something. Many people can speak and write, but not all the people have mastery of the art of language use. Style is very essential in creating drama because it makes a dramatic work more captivating, beautiful, and inviting than the other.

Recommendation

The study recommends that playwrights should be very stylistic in their dramatic creativity since style involves both linguistic and non-linguistic devices which a writer adopts to make his/her artistic work interesting, peculiar, more effective, persuasive and impactful.

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