



East African Journal of Education Studies

eajes.eanso.org

Volume 6, Issue 2, 2023

Print ISSN: 2707-3939 | Online ISSN: 2707-3947

Title DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/2707-3947>

ENSO

EAST AFRICAN
NATURE &
SCIENCE
ORGANIZATION

Original Article

The Stylistic Significance of Graphological Devices in Sam Ukala's Skeletons: A Collection of Stories

Justina N. Edokpayi, PhD¹*

¹ Ambrose Alli University, P.M.B. 14, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

* Author for Correspondence Email: ngoedos@hotmail.com

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.6.2.1382>

Date Published: **ABSTRACT**

28 August 2023

Keywords:

Language,
Graphology,
Style,
Corruption,
Nigerian Politics,
Police Force.

This paper is an investigation of Ukala's use of graphological devices, and their stylistic functions in his text, *Skeletons*. In a literary text, language and style are studied at various levels, and the scientific study of language is referred to as linguistics. Although graphology is not a branch of linguistics, its affinity with the phonic substance in particular and language in general, is so close that it exerts considerable influence on style. Therefore, the patterned system of the graphic substance is an aspect of the style of written discourse, which should not be overlooked in the study of the language of a literary text. In this paper, we subject significant graphological devices subsuming italicization, punctuations, and capitalization to practical analysis stylistically. The paper will be of immense contribution to knowledge as it will act as a springboard, to future researchers in the study of the language of African literature.

APA CITATION

Edokpayi, J. N. (2023). The Stylistic Significance of Graphological Devices in Sam Ukala's Skeletons: A Collection of Stories *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 6(2), 445-454. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.6.2.1382>.

CHICAGO CITATION

Edokpayi, Justina N. 2023. "The Stylistic Significance of Graphological Devices in Sam Ukala's Skeletons: A Collection of Stories". *East African Journal of Education Studies* 6 (2), 445-454. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.6.2.1382>

HARVARD CITATION

Edokpayi, J. N. (2023) "The Stylistic Significance of Graphological Devices in Sam Ukala's Skeletons: A Collection of Stories", *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 6(2), pp. 445-454. doi: 10.37284/eajes.6.2.1382.

IEEE CITATION

J. N., Edokpayi "The Stylistic Significance of Graphological Devices in Sam Ukala's Skeletons: A Collection of Stories" *EAJES*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 445-454, Aug. 2023.

MLA CITATION

Edokpayi, Justina N. "The Stylistic Significance of Graphological Devices in Sam Ukala's Skeletons: A Collection of Stories". *East African Journal of Education Studies*, Vol. 6, no. 2, Aug. 2023, pp. 445-454, doi:10.37284/eajes.6.2.1382

INTRODUCTION

Graphology deals with prints on paper. It is defined as "the characteristic-line-by-line arrangement of words on printed page" (Geoffrey Leech 68). David Crystal and Derek Davy also see graphology as the analogous study of language

system or orthography as seen in the various kinds of handwriting system or typography (18). The considerable influence graphology exerts on style accounts for its study as an aspect of the language of literature. Katie Wales identifies punctuation,

paragraphing, shapes, and capitalization as graphological features (183).

Sam Ukala was a professor of Drama and Theatre Arts in Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. He was a playwright and theatre director of international repute. As a literary artist, there are many plays to his credit. His published plays include *The Save Wife*, *The Log in your Eye*, *Akpakaland* (a winner of ANA/ British council Prize for Drama), *The Odour of Justice, among others*. He was also an award-winning short story writer and poet (Blurb). Ukala is an author of description; in his *Collection of Stories*, he describes events, characters, and actions so vividly that he creates images in the minds of the readers. For instance, in *Embrace of a Mirage*, his first story, there is a vivid description of the premises of the owner of London Hotel, as seen in the following extract:

The premises of the owner of London Hotel were hedged with beautiful, well-tripped, flowered shrubs. The lawns were well cut, the paths well shaven. There were squares, quadrangles, triangles, and rounds, hemmed by different kinds of flowers. Some beautiful trees stood in most of these geometrical lawns while the rest of them had umbrella shaped and multi-coloured canopies under which were round can tables, each surrounded by three or four cane chairs (p. 17)

THE SYNOPSES AND THEMES OF THE STORIES

The first story in the text entitled ‘Embrace of a Mirage’, is set in Mbiri, a village in Delta state, and Lagos, the most populous city in Nigeria. In the story, Uje, a teenager, whose father cannot afford the school fees for his secondary education on financial ground, hears a lot of fantastic things about Lagos, and how enjoyable life there is. Moreover, he has heard that Mr. Gabriel Nwagbogwu, a former primary school teacher in Mbiri, is now very rich and lives in Ikoyi, the Whiteman’s quarters in Lagos. As a result of these and the hardship in his village, Uje relocates to Lagos saying, “I must go, see and conquer Lagos” (p. 9).

Unknown to him, all his assumptions and beliefs are mere dreams; milk and honey do not flow in Lagos contrary to his expectations. With neither accommodation, nor money to transport himself back to Mbiri, Uje becomes disillusioned. In the story, Ukala paints a clear picture of the ugly situations of Nigerian villages, portraying the hardship associated with village life. He X-rays Lagos and depicts not only the hustling and bustling in the city, but also the social malaise prevalent there. The most worrisome issues in Lagos portrayed in the story include transportation problem, high crime rate and high cost of living, among others.

‘The Certificate’ is the second story in Ukala’s text under study. Nnenna, a major character in the story, is employed as a casual staff in Ivory Soap Company. She works very hard, and performs excellently in all the departments to which she has been deployed in the company. But at the expiration of the period of her temporary appointment, she faces termination of appointment; this is as a result of her lack of Primary School Leaving Certificate, which is the prerequisite for permanent appointment in the company. As Nnenna refuses to present the forged certificate procured for her by her brother, Ike, to the company due to her honesty, Ike presents it to the Personnel Manager himself. At that juncture, Nnenna discloses to her boss that the certificate is forged. Immediately, the Manager orders Ike’s arrest. But Nnenna quickly snatches the certificate, swallows it, runs outside, and jumps into the lagoon in order to save her brother. She is immediately rescued and taken to the company’s clinic. At the end of the story, the company rewards Nnenna for her hard work and honesty with an offer of temporary appointment. In the story, Ukala portrays the emphasis on paper qualification in Nigerian labour market, reward for excellence and hard work, and corruption in the Nigerian Police Force.

‘Money, Guns and Justice’, the third story, is about the atrocities committed by the Medical Director and Mortuary Attendant of Government Specialist Hospital, and a human parts merchant, Chief Arogungbomo. The criminals set the Chief

Mortuary Attendant up for exposing their crime. He is sentenced to imprisonment for lack of evidence, being betrayed by the unscrupulous policemen who witness the crime. In the story, the writer depicts criminal activities in government establishments, and the aiding and abating of crimes by corrupt members of the Nigerian Police Force.

The fourth and fifth stories entitled 'Take Me to Mkpitime' and 'Masquerade Music', respectively are about the abominable crime of repeated adultery, committed by Okpoko and Adafo, and its consequences on their families. In line with the tradition of the village, Mkpitime, the village deity, kills Okpoko for his crime. In anger and to avenge the death of her husband, Roselyn, his wife, murders Adafo, Uyo's wife, whose life is spared by the deity despite being part of the crime.

According to Ise tradition, since Okpoko has been killed by Mkpitime, all his properties including his wife and son are forfeited to the deity. To avert Roselyns's imprisonment for murder, and she and her son being inherited by Mkpitime, Lazarus, Roselyn's brother, relocates them to his house in Lagos. But nemeses catch up with them. Uyo kills Roselyn after his release from prison, and Lazarus ends up in prison for his fraudulent practices in Nigerian Ports Authority. In the story, the writer conveys the themes of immorality and retributive justice.

'Murder at Wilmer', the last story, is about a corrupt Politician, Alhaji Bako, and his political opponent in their party primaries, Dr. Aro. Aimed at defeating his opponent, Alhaji employs political thugs, and bribes the members of the women wing of the party; but he is betrayed by the women. In anger, Alhaji's thugs attack and kill Mrs. Aro and Mrs. Udume, the prominent leaders of the women wing, who are in support of Dr. Aro. But due to the prompt intervention of the police, Alhaji and his wives are killed, and the thugs are arrested with bullet wounds. Bullet, their leader is sentenced to death by hanging. In this story, the author paints a clear picture of corruption in Nigerian politics, portraying incessant assassinations, thuggery, and the use of money to

purchase votes, among other vices associated with Nigerian politics.

In the different stories in *Skeletons*, Ukala X-rays various aspects of the Nigerian society; he denounces societal ills and recommends corrective measures for reformation aimed at a better society. This reintegrates the fact that literature is a vital means for societal reformation, and emphasizes the value of literary artists in every society.

Graphological Features in the Text

In this paper, we examine the following foregrounded graphological features which Ukala puts to his stylistic advantage in his text under study. Note that the title of each story is represented by a word from its original title as follows:

Embrace of a mirage – Mirage

The Certificate – Certificate

Money, Gun, and Justice – Money

Take me to Mkpitime – Mkpitime

Masquerade Music – Masquerade

Murder at Wilmer - Murder

The Use of Italicization

This is a graphological marker which deals with printing on paper in a peculiar manner for the artistic effect of grounding. In literary creation, italicization is used to highlight pieces of information. We observe Ukala's prominent use of italicization for aesthetics, emphasis, and to present the thoughts of some characters in the text. Linguistic usages not in English in the text are also presented in italics. We exemplify and analyse the author's use of italicization *Skeletons* in the samples below.

The use of italicization for the presentation of characters' thoughts

1. *Wasn't life friendlier in Lagos? Why then did not people who go there ever return? Certainly, the catechist gramophone*

- didn't lie. Lagos is enjoyable. (p. 10) Mirage*
2. *Is Roselyn a witch? Impossible! Even if she were, could she want to harm me? The incubuses fused into one mass and that mass transfigured into Roselyn. Do they want her to take the punishment for their own wickedness? Oh, how I pounded pleurably at the poor girl. How she groaned! ... (p. 83) Mkpitime*
 3. *Aren't all beautiful women politicians, who make up like Mrs. Udume, ever ready for a lick that would yield money or power? What does it matter if they are married? What has morality to do with money and power? (p. 121) Murder*
 4. *It might be my fate. I'm fated to die of hunger, hence something stops me from doing the easiest thing I could do to save myself. These many beggars here are receiving generous alms under my very nose, and I'm looking on, simply looking on ... Why am I keeping this five pence anyway? If I don't die before tomorrow morning, would five pence get me back to Iddo park, let alone to Mbiri? Where would I sleep this night? I shall come again in my car and we would smile together ... I shall come again in my car I shall buy you many things... Is this the end of my dream? (p. 31) Mirage*
 5. *This handsome, flexible teacher likes me! He is full of youthfulness and of songs ... He is so cheerful and gentle that he would not beat his wife ... (p. 79) Take me to Mkpitime*
 6. *I'll run away. I'll simply run clean away and he can do nothing ... (p. 85) Take me to Mkpitime*
 7. *Those claws didn't pierce my scalp? (p. 20) Mirage*
 8. *Does Lagos have a bad side? It must be the stink of riches. Oh, yes! I heard my teacher say that someone was stinkingly rich! Even the mosquitoes in Lagos must be stinkingly rich, hence they grow to massive sizes. (p. 15) Mirage*
 9. *Why do they hustle so? May be it's the rule here. You either hustled or they push you down and trample you to death. In*

this mad crowd, you have no individuality. You can't move at your own pace. No, you have no pace of your own. You are merely a soldier ant in a column ... Why did Bola not come down a bit to ... to say goodbye? (p. 24-25)

10. *I needed some time to think. Did Bola return with that bus? Where would I go from Boundary? Whom would I ask about Gabriel Nwagbogwu? Where was I standing that was so close to the milling crowd yet so relatively serene? (p. 23) Mirage*

Ukala makes prominent use of italicization in the text under study as exemplified above, especially for the presentation of the characters' thoughts. In excerpt 1 for instance, he expresses Uje's thought about his erroneous belief that life in Lagos is very enjoyable, the reason for which he relocates there from Mbiri. Moreover, he wonders why those who go there never return home if the life there is not really enjoyable.

Example 2 is a presentation of Mr. Obuse's thought, which arises from the bad dream he has in his sick state. Due to the way the incubuses which have attacked him in a dream have infused into Roselyn, one of his class pupils, who does his house chores, he wonders if she is a witch. Having given the incident a serious thought, he finally concludes that she is not a witch, and therefore decides to marry her despite the terrible dream.

In sample 3, the writer expresses Alhaji Bako's thoughts and impression about beautiful woman in politics, who make up like Mrs. Udume, a prominent member of their party. In the company of two other members of the Women Wing of the party, she has assured Alhaji of the women's support having promised them money bribe. Becoming excited and attracted to her blood-red lips, the lecherous Alhaji lustfully concludes that he will kiss her on her lips. His impression about the women in the excerpt is borne out of his erroneous belief that the women have accepted his money bribe, to support his nomination in the party. But unknown to him, they have merely deceived him.

Excerpt 4 is Ukala's presentation of Uje's thought process about his state of dilemma and disillusionment in Lagos. His precarious situation has arisen from his bitter and unexpected experiences from the monstrous Nedchadnezzar, and Mr. Nwagbogwu since his arrival in Lagos, a city, he ironically believes to be full of "so Merchandizer enjoyment". Uje's situation is further compounded because Elegbe, an Mbiri man, who is helping him, has no place of his own in Lagos to accommodate him due to circumstances beyond his control; he lives with his brother who has a wife and four children. He leaves Uje at Boundary market disillusioned, especially without accommodation and transport fare back to Mbiri. The rhetorical questions in this sample are deployed by Ukala to emphasize the seriousness of Uje's predicament.

With the deployment of graphological device of italicization in extract 5 and 6, the writer conveys the themes of love and lust, and also condemns immorality in totality. He presents Roselyn's emotions of love and thoughts as she admires Mr. Obuse, her cheerful and gentle teacher in extract 5. She has nursed the dream of becoming his wife later, especially as he has chosen her among all the girls in his class, for his house chores. Moreover, he has once told her that he likes her. But unfortunately, Mr. Festus Okpoko kills her dream. In sample 6, Ukala expresses Rosalyn's thought about her decision to run away from the promiscuous and ugly Mr. Okpoko, a school teacher. On her way from Mr. Obuse's house the fateful evening in which Okpoko ruins her life, he stops her and succeeds in luring her to bed. The encounter results to her teenage pregnancy and unfortunate marriage to him, leaving Obuse who genuinely loves her disappointed and heart-broken. As a result of the report from the inquiry instituted by the C.M.S. church, Rosalyn faces expulsion from school. Okpoko is sacked and evicted from the Teachers' Quarters, and Rosalyn's parents harass him into marrying her immediately.

In the same vein, Ukala captures Uje's thought process through the use of italics in sample 7. In his attempt to locate Mr. Nwagbogwu, his

relation, that he expects will accommodate and help him in Lagos, Bola directs him to the residence of the owner of London Hotel in error. The man becomes so ruthless and angry with the two boys that they likened him to the biblical Nebuchadnezzar. He subjects Uje and Bola to ill-treatment and torture in anger. Immediately, he relieves Bola of his appointment as his security man for directing Uje to his house. Turning to Uje, he spreads his monstrous claws over his head, picks him up inflicting sharp pain on his head. The pain leaves the boy thinking, and relieved that his scalp is not pierced by the man's monstrous claws.

Sample 8 is the author's use of italics for the expression of Uje's thoughts on his first day in Lagos. After a long journey from Mbiri to Lagos and a heavy meal, he expects to sleep heavily due to tiredness, but sleep eludes him as a result of giant mosquitoes and an acrid stench in the environment. As a result of these ugly experiences that first night, which are contrary to his expectations and the fantastic stories he has heard about Lagos, he wonders whether Lagos has a bad side. In self-consolation, he assumes that the stink is of riches, and that the mosquitoes in Lagos are giants because they must be stinking rich.

Excerpt 9 also exemplifies the artist's use of italics for stylistic effect in his stories. Here, he gives a vivid description of the hustling nature of life in Lagos, and how it poses danger and threat to human life through Uje's thought. This is as he wonders why people hustle the way they do there, and the conclusion that it may be the rule.

The Use of Italicization for Letter Writing

Ukala also deploys italics for letter writing in the text as exemplified below.

Dear Baba and Mama, Please, do not look for me: I have gone to Lagos to look for the white man's work. I shall stay with Gabriel Nwagbogwu and become a big man like him. I shall come again in my car and we shall smile together because I shall buy you many self-consolation things. Goodbye, Tushie, goodbye. Goodbye, Baba and Mama.

Yours lovely son, Uje. (p. 13) Mirage

The author deploys italicization in the example above, to presents Uje's letter to his parents before leaving Mbiri for Lagos. As a result of poverty, Uje's father is unable to send him to college after primary school. Prior to this time, Uje has nursed the dream of going to Lagos due to the fantastic things he has heard about the city in a song from the catechist's gramophone. Having saved enough money for transportation, he plans to relocate there. But his father advises him against it, on the ground that they have no relation to accommodate him there. Against his father's advice, Uje writes and drops the letter above for his parents before leaving Mbiri, for greener pasture. He has relocated to Lagos as a result of poverty and hardship in his village. In this example, Ukala has not only portrayed poverty and hardship associated with village life, but the rural urban drift prevalent in Nigeria.

The Use of Italicization for Words of other Languages

We also observe that the author uses italics for words of other languages that are incorporated into his English target text. Here are some instances.

acamu (p. 83) *Mkpitime* - Ibo word

akara (p. 83) *Mkpitime* – a common Nigerian indigenous lexical item

banza (102) *Mkpitime* - an Hausa word

Haba! (p. 105)- *Mkpitime* - an Hausa word

esprit de corps (p. 105) *Mkpitime* - a Latin word

kpa kappa (p. 60) *Money* - a Yoruba lexical item

agbada (p. 68) *Money* - a common Nigerian indigenous lexical item

A-e kappa (p. 89) *Masquerade* - an Ibo lexica item

We note that the writer has incorporated the above words of Nigerian languages into his target text in English for stylistic effects. While some have been used because they lack English equivalents, others have been incorporated for the artistic

purpose of promoting Nigerian culture, especially the Nigerian languages.

Punctuations

Punctuation marks are used in writing to provide the same signals such as pause, voice pitch or stress that we use in speech to delineate one word or a group of words ... to aid the reader to understand the writer's ideas and clearly (Dukiya 106 - 107). Due to the poetic license available to literary artists, Ukala sometimes deploys punctuation marks unconventionally in the text for artistic effects. Below are instances of the writer's use of punctuation marks and their artistic functions.

The Comma

A comma is a punctuation mark which is conventionally used for listing things, among other uses. But sometimes, literary artists put it to creative use aberrantly for stylistic effects as exemplified in the following excerpts.

1. *The commodities had also changed from raw to cooked or fried food. Different voices pierced the quieting night at short intervals: "Fried fish here!", "Ogi reel!", "Hot jollof!", "Amala and ewedu!", "Sweet akara", "Bole!", "White rice and chicken stew!", "Eba andox tail", "Pounded yam and bush meat!", "Moin Moni n'gbona!"* (p. 30) *Mirage*
2. *When she found none, she began to pack everything in the house together, putting the clothes in bundles, books in a carton, plates and pots in a basin, pots and pans in themortar, and so on.* (p. 96) *Mkpitime*
3. *Roselyn, beautiful, lustful, intelligent, impulsive, murderous, young, and precocious, wasto be bottled up in the shrine of Mkpitime after the rituals of that day.* (p. 95)
4. *When she found none, she began to pack everything in the house together, putting the clothes in bundles, books in a carton, plates, and cups in a basin, pots, and pans in the mortar.* (p. 96)
5. *The young man observed me closely, me and my small raffia bag that contained my*

brown shorts and a yellow poplin shirt, which were my Sunday clothes, a slightly torn singlet, a wooden comb, and a chewing stick. (p. 17)

In above extracts, we observe Ukala's prominent use of commas in the text. With his extensive use of the commas in excerpt 1 for instance, he has not only itemized the types of food sold in boundary night market in Lagos, but also identified the different kinds of food eaten by the different tribes in Nigeria. On the whole, nine commas are used in the extract to list the types of food.

Sample 2 above, is another example of Ukala's use of comma aberrantly for artistry. We notice that seven commas are used in a single sentence. The writer deploys them to reveal both good and bad attributes of Roselyn.

Similarly, six commas have been used in excerpt 3 for stylistic effect. The writer uses them to itemize the properties in Okpoko's house, which Christiana, his wife's mother arranges. This is to enable her to pack them from Okpoko's house to their own house. But as tradition demands since Okpoko has been killed by Mkpitime, for his abominable act of repeated adultery, his properties including his wife and son are forfeited to the deity.

Excerpt 4 is another instance of the author's prominent use of comma, in his work under study. The contents of Uje's small raffia bag, which he has brought from Mbirri to Lagos are listed with four commas.

Ellipsis

Ellipsis involves three dots in a printed text, indicating where one or more words have been omitted intentionally. Faith Ibhawaegbele adds that such dots indicate omission of a word or words from the middle of sentences, a lapse of time, or a particularly long pause. Ellipsis points are used to avoid repetition, and to achieve foregrounding (29). We exemplify below Ukala's use of ellipsis in the text for artistry.

1. *"Yes, yes, I know ... But ... what have I done?" (p. 67) Money*

2. *Ah! Lagos! That's where Lazurus is king. He must be the ... Comma ... Commanda... What did you call him?" (p. 110) Masquerade Music*

3. *I took over with some boldness. "I am Uje, the son of Okoje of Mbirri. He said I should greet you ... I ... I want to learn a trade or go to college". (p. 27) Mirage*

4. *"Why woman?" I mean to ... take them one by one ... I was ... going ... to load my ... gun for La ..." (p. 113)*

We observe Ukala's profuse use of ellipsis in the text for artistry. Extract 1 is the writer's presentation of Tosin's answer to a question by Gobo, his dreaded criminal cellmate. Crushing Tosin's Adam apple between his thumb and forefinger, the criminal threatens and asks him whether he is aware that he can burst his throat like that. The dots in Tosin's utterances in this sample indicate omission of words, arising from the fact that he has responded to Gobo's questions in fear.

Ukala captures injustices, police brutality and psychological trauma in the text also. He deploys ellipsis in excerpt 2 to present Uyo's utterances in an unfortunate and precarious situation, having languished in jail innocently for several months in Obodo-Uku police station. Uyo who has been accused of murdering his wife, is so tortured in the cell that his health deteriorates. The writer captures his deteriorating health condition, which has arisen from psychological trauma with the use of ellipsis in extract 2. He is traumatized not only by his experience of the gruesome murder of his wife, but being innocently accused, tortured, and imprisoned for the murder.

The writer captures fear in extract 3 above. Having searched unsuccessfully for Mr. Gabriel Nwagbogwu's house, Elegbe, an Mbirri man, finally directs Uje there. But to their greatest surprise, Mr. Nwagbogwu embarrasses and harasses them for coming to his house. The ellipsis in the excerpt captures Uje's panic, and fear while introducing himself to Nwagbogwu who is already furious because of their visit.

Having shot Rosalyn dead, Uyo tries to escape, but Inspector Akhigbe, who has disguised as Flimsy accosts him. She orders him at gun point to stop or be shot. But Uyo points his empty gun at her in order to scare her dramatically, not believing that a woman can shoot a gun. In self defence, the inspector shoots him down immediately. In sample 4 above, the writer deploys ellipsis to express Uyo's last utterance in a helpless state before his death. The themes of feminism and injustice are conveyed in this extract. The author portrays men's erroneous belief about women's weakness, which accounts for Uyo disbelief that there is power in Flimsy's hand, and that a mere woman can shoot a gun. Again, he has stopped when ordered by Flimsy to so because he could not stand the shame of being scared by a mere woman's voice. But in line with feminist advocacy, Flimsy, a woman kills him, thereby correcting men's erroneous views about women.

The Full Stop or Period

"The full stop or periods is used to mark the end of a declarative sentence or an imperative sentence that issues its commands mildly" (Inyang Udofot and Bassey Ekpenyong 139). In literary texts, creative writers sometimes put the full stop to aberrant use for artistry. Here are examples of Ukala's use of full stop aberrantly in the text.

1. *"That house? "I gasped in utter amazement. "Yes. That house". (p. 15)*
2. *"Tough". (p. 34)*
3. *A man's company. A man of weight. (p. 69)*
4. *Kicks at the front door. Bangs on the windows. A gunshot. (p. 65)*

Stylistically, the noun phrases, used as sentences ending with full stops in sample 1, constitute the author's aberrant usages. On his arrival in Lagos, Uje sets out in search of his relation, Mr. Nwagbogwu, to accommodate him. Erroneously, he is directed to London Hotel, an imposing house belonging to someone else. The writer utilizes phrases as sentences in the example to capture

Uje's surprise and amazement on seeing the imposing house. His amazement is borne out of his erroneous belief that he will live in the house since it belongs to Mr. Nwagbogwu, with whom he has planned to live in Lagos. Moreover, Ukala emphasizes the uniqueness of London Hotel in the excerpt.

In the same vein, a phrase has been deployed as a sentence in extract 2 for stylistic effect. During an interview for the recruitment of casual staff in Ivory Soap Company, the recruitment clerk who notices that Nnenna is the only female applicant, instructs her to take a look behind and tell him her observation. In response, Nnenna confirms that there is no other girl among the applicants. When asked by the clerk what her idea of casual work is, she says: "Tough". He also asks whether she still wants the job despite its tough and dirty nature, and Nnenna responds in the affirmative. At the end, she is employed among the fifteen recruited casuals out of over two hundred applicants. The writer conveys the theme of courage and assertiveness in line with feminist ideologies in this example. Despite the nature of the casual job, Nnenna did not only accept it, but performs excellently in all the departments to which she has been deployed in the company.

Moreover, in sample 3, Ukala exposes the lust and immorality prevalent in the society with the aberrant use of the phrases, which end with periods as declarative sentences that state facts. As a result of lust, Chief Jato avails himself of the opportunity of Oluwatosin's imprisonment to visit his wife, Clara, at night to sleep with her. Oluwatosin has been set up by the criminals involved in the sale and purchase of human parts in the Specialist Hospital. Though innocent, but Oluwatosin is found guilty in court, and asked to pay damages. He remains in prison custody due to his inability to pay a fine of fifty thousand naira. In response to Clara's assertion that she does not need his protection, but that of the police, Chief Jato says to her:

"You need company. A man's company. A man of weight. If I pass the night here, no

marauder would come and you won't need the police. (69).

Though Chief claims to have come to spend the night with Clara to protect her, he has the ulterior motive of sleeping with her. He succeeds in taking advantage of her precarious situation. With the promise to give her the fifty thousand naira, with which to free her husband from prison, he lures her to bed. The author depicts lust and immorality in this excerpt.

Although the phrases in sample 4 are used as sentences that end with periods, they do not make complete senses. They are deviant usages, but put to stylistic advantage by the author. He uses them to describe the horrible experiences of Clara, who is harassed by Marauders, the first night after husband's imprisonment. As a result of the terrible ordeal, she becomes so terrified that she faints out of fear.

Capitalization

A capital letter is used at the beginning of a sentence unless the sentence follows a semi-colon or colon ... Some writers choose to capitalize pronouns of deities ... (Inyang Udofor and Bassey Ekpenyong (149). In literary text, artists resort to the use of capital letters for various stylistic effects, especially for emphasis and to give prominence to some aspects of writing as shown in the following extracts.

1. *In the east side of the Casual Gate stood a beautiful and imposing motor gate, upon which was artistically inscribed in blue letters, IVORY SOUP COMPANY LIMITED. (p. 33) Certificate*
2. *His own company, LAZACO, a clearing and forwarding company ... (p. 112) Mkpitime*

In each of the extracts, the name of a company is capitalized to arrest reader's attention since it arouses his curiosity as to why the writer capitalized such words and letters. We also observe that capitalization also highlights information.

Ukala has also deployed capitalization for abbreviations as exemplified below.

The Use of Acronyms

- C.I.D. (114) Masquerade –Criminal Investigation Department
- I.S.C. (47) Certificate - Ivory Soap Company
- D.P.O. (61) Money - Divisional Police Officer
- C. M.A. (61) Money, Gun and Justice – Chief Mortuary Attendant
- N.T. A (124) Murder - Nigerian Television Authority
- M.A. (60) Money, Gun and Justice - Mortuary Attendant
- P. M. (49) Money, Gun, and Justice - Personnel Manager

In above samples, the artist capitalizes some words and letters in the text for the artistic effect of foregrounding.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we have shown how Ukala has utilized graphological patterning in his text under study to convey his artistic visions and for aesthetic purpose. We have established the fact that due to the poetic license, which literary artists enjoy, Ukala has sometimes deviated deliberately from the normal semantic interpretation of the vocabulary of some English words in the stories. This is manifested in his use of graphological features, comprising italicization, punctuations and capitalization discussed in this study.

WORKS CITED

- Cryatal, David and Derek, Davy. Investigating English Style, London: Longman, 1969. Print.
- Dukiya, F. "Use of Punctuation" In Mick Short. Ed. Reading an Undergraduate Text on English Language and Literature, Paper Back Publisher Ltd., 1991, pp. 59-72.
- Edokpayi Justina. "A Graphological Analysis of Buchi Emecheta's the Joy of Motherhood. Iroroh: A Journal of Arts, Ambroe Alii University, Ekpoma, Vol. 11, 2006, pp. 63-69. Print.

Ibhawaegbele, Faith. “Graphic Symbols as Carriers of Meaning: Obu Udeozo’s Peotry in Focus” (Ed) Adagbonyin Sonnie *in the Garden of Memory*. Ibadan: Safmos Publishers, 2013 Print.

Leech, Geoffrey. *A Linguistic Guide to English Peotry*. Longman Group Ltd., 1969. Print.

Udofot, Inyang and Bassey, Ekpenyong. *A Comprehension English Course for Schools and Colleges*. Development Universal Consortia, 2019. Print.

Ukala, Sam. *Skeletons*. Kraft Books, 2001. Print.

Wales, Katie. *A Dictionary of Stylistics*. Pearson Education Ltd. 2001. Print.