

Pragma-Stylistic Analysis of Rhetorical Questions in some Selected Poems of *Akilu Aliyu*

Salisu Garba

Department of African Languages and Cultures
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria- Nigeria.

Abstract

The uniqueness of Akilu's poetry is in his dexterous manipulation and stylistic usage of language to convey his message across the target readers. The aim of this paper is to examine the stylistic usage of interrogatives as rhetorical questions and persuasive techniques with the view of evaluating the effectiveness of the devices deployed by the artist. The paper thus tries to assert that, style makes or mars poetry. The selected poems are from the collection of *Fasaha Akiliya* (1978) and they include: *Kalubale*(Kbl), *Daddadan dadi Saniya* (Dds), *Kadaura* (Kdr), *Dan daudu* (Ddu), *Duniya Rawar 'Yan mata* (Dry), *Kasaitaccen Gari Legas* (Kgl), *Hausa Mai Ban Hausi* (Hbh) and *Isra'i* (Iri). The English renditions were mainly adopted from Muhammad (1977) and the efforts of the researcher. The paper thus, using *rhetorical criticism*, illustrates its focus through twenty rhetorical questions employed as persuasive devices which are aesthetically and effectively used by the poet in the corpus. The paper, further showcases that, all the rhetorical questions are semantically declaratives and assertive. The paper hence concludes that, all the persuasive techniques; *inferential, inquiry and conversational*, are thought provoking and persuasive enough. It further discovered that, the artist employs some open questions so as to persuade the audience on the need to redress and change the situation. While on the other hand he employs closed rhetorical questions to effectively persuade the target audience on the prestigious nature of knowledge in the life of humankind. Finally, the paper concludes the proper and effective usage of the stylistic device in particular and the language in general

Keywords: Pragma-Stylistics, Rhetoric, Rhetorical Question and Rhetorical Criticism

1.0 Introduction

The main aim of a poet is to instruct and delight his target audience this is what makes poetry a calculated means of achieving effects in his audience (Abrams 2012:344). The aim is perfectly achieved by powerful use and manipulation of language. Therefore, the uniqueness of Akilu's poetry is in his skillful linguistic manipulation and stylistic usage of the language in conveying the message across the target readers. Akilu Aliyu as a poetic celebrity unveils his mind in his various literary compositions through many linguistic and stylistic avenues. In this article, Akilu employs grammatical interrogatives as rhetorical questions to express his opinion on the educational, sociological, political and economic situation of Hausa society and the perception of the Hausa folk. The poet also uses the same interrogatives as persuasive techniques in three peculiar persuasive patterns: *inferential, inquiry and conversational techniques*.

1.1 Pragma-Stylistics

Pragmatics simply refers to the study of the way in which language is used to express what somebody really means in particular situations, especially when the actual words used appear to be something different. Therefore, Pragma-stylistics refers to the appropriateness of an utterance and the degree of effectiveness of an utterance in relation to the target audience. In other words, it is the linguistics of the utterances (Ayodabo, 1997:137, Lawal (1997:150, Syal and Jidal 2001:129).

1.2 Rhetoric

Rhetoric is the deliberate exploitation of eloquence for the most persuasive effect in public speaking or in writing. Modern critics refer to rhetorical dimension of literary work, as those aspects of the work that persuade or otherwise guide the responses of readers. Stephen (2000:38) adds that, rhetoric can be seen as an art of speaking and writing so as to win an audience round. While Abrams (2012;342), narrates the view of Aristotle

on Rhetorical discourse as being the art of discovering all the available means of persuasion in any given case or situation. To give the subject a moral support, Abrams (2012:343) posits it as an art of a good man skilled in speaking. To sum up the art of rhetoric, in a broader perspective, Abrams (2012:343) further asserts that, "it is the study of language in its practical uses, focusing on the persuasive and other effects of language, and on the means by which one can achieve those effects on auditors or readers". An effective rhetorical discourse is expected to comprise three basic features: *invention* (the findings of arguments or proofs), *disposition* (the arrangement of such materials), *style* (the choice of words, verbal patterns, and the rhythms that will most effectively express and convey these materials). These facilitating features are otherwise presented by Ahmed (2022:55), as the speakers' credibility and trustworthiness, which comprises good will towards the audience, good sense and good moral character, followed by the speakers' persuasive arguments and lastly, their appeal to the emotions of the audience

The artist, despite being a good member of the *Tijjaniya* religious sect and its songster, he also participated actively in the political and economic emancipation of the target audience in the pre-and post-independence Nigerian politics. He was the legal adviser of the Northern Element Progressive Union (*NEPU*), the main opposition party, which made him served several jail sentences on this course (see Muhammad 1977 and Garba 2011). Therefore, his religious attachment and the Maxis' approach to politics earned him enormous respect and a sense of trust from the target audience which enable him conversed a massive support of his audience for his political struggle against the ruling Northern People Congress (NPC). Therefore, the artist stands the chance of persuading the target audience using the rhetorical processes.

1.3 Rhetorical Question

According to Abrams (2012:347) rhetorical question is a sentence in the grammatical form of a question which is not asked in order to request information or to invite a reply, but to achieve a greater expressive force than a direct assertion. He further posits that, the figure is often

used in persuasive discourse and tends to impart an oratorical tone to an utterance, whether in prose or verse. The most common form of rhetorical question, as a figure, is one that won't take 'YES' for an answer. Similarly, Baldick (2004:218) sees rhetorical question as a question asked for the sake of persuasive effect, rather than, as a genuine request for information, the speaker implying that, the answer is too obvious to require a reply, as in Milton's line: "*for what can war but endless war still breed?*"

Therefore, poetic devices could be seen as the foreground application of some linguistic techniques by the artist, in relation to poetry, to ease and beautify the composition. Poetry is seen as an expression of thoughts that are sublime through deliberate violations of the rules of grammar, and the use of surprising metaphors and other devices by which the language draws attention to itself. The violations do not only foreground the poem as a medium, but also highlight the mind of the poet (Baldick, 2004: 100 and Kolawole, 1997:4). The inspiring nature of the language of poetry is what always attracts the attention of many linguists and researchers.

Alabi, (1997: 59-60) further opines that, questions are of two main classes, open and closed interrogatives. He then posits that; open interrogatives are clauses that illicit more open ended responses. The artist employs some open questions so as to persuade the target readers and audience on the need to redress and change the situation. On the other hand, closed interrogatives are those clauses that very limited number of responses are expected. The artist employs such rhetorical questions to effectively persuade the readers on the prestigious nature of knowledge in the life of humankind.

1.4 Rhetorical Criticism

The theory was developed in 1950s, as a departure from the earlier criticisms like *expressive and objective* of the early days, which attributed powers of the author or views a literary piece as an independent object, to the *pragmatic notion* of considering a poem as a deployment of established artistic means for achieving foreseen effects upon its readers. According to the theory, the aim of a poet is to instruct or delight a reader, and preferably to do both. Therefore, poetry

according to it is a calculated means to achieve effects on its audience. It further asserts that, the primary focus of a literary work itself should be given special attention without unnecessary departure from it. The theory also undertakes to identify and analyze those elements within a poem or a prose narrative which are there primarily in order to affect certain responses in a reader (Abrams 2012:344). Therefore, the theory fits the paper in that, the paper aims at showcasing the effective usage of stylistic device and its effects on the target audience as vividly portrayed in the paper.

The relevance of the approach could also be seen in the efforts of the artist to persuade the target audience towards the value of education and its role in the economic and political emancipation of a given community. Also to persuade them on the excessive need to curtail the prevailing social vices for social stability and political emancipation of their culture. The artist further employed the approach to persuade the target audience on their economic resources and their economic viability, consequently their economic and political prosperity.

1.6 Aim and objectives of the paper

The paper aimed at analyzing the poetic device of rhetorical question as employed by Akilu Aliyu

2.1.1. Educational

The artist, tries to persuade the target audience on the importance and prestige attached to education. He also cautions the Hausa folk on the threats of ignorance and the risk awaiting the ignorant as he posits:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a) <i>Yau koshi waye da shi?</i> | <i>Who today have satisfaction?</i> |
| <i>Mutan ilmi suka hamdale</i> | <i>Learned men are the contented</i> |
| b) <i>Su wa ye masu fada a ji</i> | <i>who are they that speak</i> |
| | <i>and are listened to?</i> |
| <i>Da sun Magana ta daddale?</i> | <i>Whose word when uttered is</i> |
| <i>final?)</i> | |
| c) <i>Cikon girma wa ke da shi?</i> | <i>Complete responsibility who</i> |
| <i>possess it?</i> | |
| <i>Mutan ilmi suka kammale .</i> | <i>Learned have all (KBL:24-26)</i> |

In the above verses, the artist highlights the significance of knowledge and the social status of the knowledgeable. On the other hand, he emphatically highlights the dangers of ignorance and social degradation being experienced by the ignorant members of Hausa society. The grammatical structure of the sentences is interrogative but rhetorically is a declarative sentence asserting that, it is only the educated members of the society that enjoy a prestigious life in the society. It also indicates that, the educated members of Hausa society are well placed, well respected and enjoy their lives hand-in-hand with traditional authorities. Consequently, the popular Hausa saying: *Malami kamar wani Sarki* (Malami (Educated person) is similar to an Emir). By implication, they earned the full respect of the populace and quite influenced the decision process of the

and its effects on the target readers in some selected poems. To achieve the general aim of the article, the following objectives are outlined to be achieved at the final analysis of the paper:

- i) to explicate the interrogatives as rhetorical questions as manipulated by the artist in the selected poems.
- ii) To identify the persuasive techniques and their anticipated effects on the target readers as skillfully employed by the artist.

2.1 Data Analysis:

The data in the corpus was analyzed using the rhetorical approach taking into consideration some salient points from a visionary artist, Akilu Aliyu. The data was categorized into: educational, socio-political, socio-cultural, socio-moral, social and political aspects that were very essential on the life and progress of an individual and of a successful communal life. The crucial nature of the aspects necessitates employing the approach by the artist to skillfully and successfully persuade the audience toward the main focus of the poem. The poet employs grammatical interrogatives as rhetorical questions to portray and persuade the Hausa folk on some educational, economic, social and political issues bedeviling the society

society as the traditional authorities. Finally, the artist is persuading the Hausa folk by displaying the worthiness of knowledge and the educated elite in Hausa society.

d) *Da farko bai nem ilmu ba, From the beginning he did not seek knowledge*

Da ya zai gane yau, bale? How then can he understand today, let alone--?

The implication of the above verse, even though, interrogative in nature, is asserting that, whoever does not quest for knowledge at a tender age, could not have acquired a sense of critical thinking that could lead him to having a good foresight and noble interpretation of affairs. Here, the artist persuades the target readers towards perceiving the dangers of ignorance and the ignorant in the society. The poet was also trying to assert the blame worthiness of ignorance/ignorant in the society.

e). *Shin ko akwai wani namu ba ilmi ba, Pray, is there any (thing) we have a part from knowledge,*

Mai kai mutum kolkoliyar Jorawa? Which can take a man to the highest attainable peak? (KDR:11)

Furthermore, in this above verse, the poet inquires whether there could be anything, apart from knowledge, which could raise the banner of an individual to the highest attainable peak in life. He then affirms the most certain answer in the following stanza that, 'perchance, your answer (would be) 'certainly, there is not. Therefore, declaring that, it is only knowledge that could raise an individual to any attainable topmost position in life.

f) *In ba sani a wajenka, wa ka kula ka? Without knowledge, who cares about you?*

Balle ka dinga cika kana batsewa? Talk more of showing off?)

g) *In ba sani a wajenka, kai ne Mantau, Without knowledge, you are the forgotten,*

Wa zai tuna ka, ya kai yana kawowa? Who would ever remember you, over and over? (KDR:42-43)

The artist again, went further to inquire on whether there will be anybody in the community that would ever be mindful of an ignorant person, consequent upon which would make him show off. He then asserts that, when a person is ignorant, he would certainly be forgotten, for none could ever dare to remember him. Here, in his efforts to persuade the Hausa folk on the significance of education in terms of public relations, he asserts that, without knowledge, nobody will ever care about you, because you cannot advance among equals and you will certainly be forgotten in the near future. Since you have not invested in the best and the real legacy; education. Therefore, the poet declares that, there is no way an ignorant could enjoy any serious public relation with the community that could remind members about him, so when he dies, he ceased to exist completely.

2.1.2. Economic

While the artist emphasized the high ranking status of knowledge and derogatory position of ignorance in the previous verses, the poet appraises the multiple economic importance of a cow as perceived by the members of Hausa community which attests to the economic potentialities of the society and the possible subsisting economic system.

a) *Anya kuwa, a same shi dai? perchance, could it be gotten?*

Amsa naka so, na tambaya. It is a question, I need an answer

b) *Shin koko akwai abu ne daban, Or is there anything?*

Marashin faida daga saniya? That is valueless in a cow? (DDS:34,35)

To further buttress the economic importance of a cow and the economic standing of Hausa community, the artist rhetorically, in these verses, inquires whether it is possible to get something worthless out of a cow. He then insists on the target readers to mention anything, even a minute item, that can be considered worthless out of a cow. Invariably, the artist here asserts that, nothing is valueless in a cow, that everything in a cow has economic value in one way or the other, which is essential to human and national development. Therefore, the interrogatives employed here are all declaratives and affirmatives. The artist invariably asserting the economic importance of a cow and metonymically, the economic stand of the Hausa community in general.

2.1.3. Social

To portray some of the social problems of Hausa community, the poet posits the following:

a) *Sai ta ce, me nai maka? And she will say: what have I done to you?*

Ba abin da ka mallaka, You possessed nothing,

Ban da neman tankiya. Except being quarrelsome.

b) *In ya ce mata, "zo ki ji"* *When he says to her, "come and listen"*
Sai ta ce, "Me za na ji?" *Then she says, what should I listen to?*

On the other hand, the artist in the above verses, highlights the need for modesty in the life style of a folk and members not to be deceived by worldly trash for a society to prosper. The verses rhetorically narrate the conversation between the personified world, as profligate woman and the detracted person, on how the world refused him any attention, while he brags. That, she always quizzed on what she has done to him, while he has nothing to convince her on his contention. When he insisted on calling her attention, she always replies that, he has nothing worth listening. Here is the similitude of the worldly distraction on human kind; especially those who tend to follow their lust in their worldly investments. In other words, whatever an individual invests in his lust for worldly satisfaction, he always feels like accumulating more, for he feels, he is worth nothing and therefore can never be satisfied. Therefore, he ends up toiling himself uselessly in his bid to satisfy the worldly passion. The poet here tries to persuade the target readers and cautioned them on the deceptive nature of the worldly trash as read in the verses above.

2.1.4. Socio-cultural

In the following verse, the artist, in his effort to persuade the target audience, portrays an aspect of socio-cultural decadence, another piece of worrisome attitude in the Hausa community.

a) *Wannan abin kunya ina tamka tai?* *This shameful act, where is its equal?*
Harshen wajen kakanka kai ka kasa *The language of your grandfather, you were not able? (HBH:42)*

The artist further highlights the problems associated with the absence of cultural belongings and social attitude of self-respect which has serious effect on an individual's cultural heritage. He exemplifies with the attitude of our preference of imperial languages over the native ones, disregarding their primacy in the dissemination and preservation of culture. Rhetorically, in the verse above, the poet inquires whether there could be a shameful act as relegating one's native language for an imperial one? The clear manifestation could be seen in their inability to converse in their native language, as they do in the imperial language. He therefore, affirms the shameful situation of the Hausa community as they abandoned *Hausa language* for *English and French* which are imperial in nature. Consequently, he asserts that, such attitudes, are parts of the socio-cultural crises manifesting in the daily activities of the target audience. The artist is trying to persuade the target readers to abandon the imperialist language and to be more nationalistic in all their affairs, especially in adopting their native languages for their lively pursuits.

b) *Dan-hansin ya ke,ko Dan-Daudu? Is he Dan-hansin or Dan daudu?*
Wa ma zai kula garar kashi? *Who will care about the useless fellow? (DDU:5)*

Still on the socio-cultural issues, the poet persuades the community on the menace of Dan daudu (a man who dresses as a woman, speaks in falsetto voice and trades mainly with women) (Bargery 1993:227), which was gaining currency in the society. Therefore, rhetorically, in this verse, the poet inquires on what is his actual name, was it Dandaudu or Danhansin? As useless as he is, who will even care to get his name correctly? Deliberate discard of the name, will surely attract the attention of the target readers to contemplate on which is the real name and why the two names? Therefore, the poet invariably asserts the blameworthiness of whoever indulges himself in this obnoxious act in the sight of the community.

2.1.5. Socio-political

The poet in his quest to mobilize the target audience toward addressing some socio-political problems, narrates the following verses;

a) *Wane ne za shi kushe ta?* *Who will censure it?*
Sai dai wawan mutum, gabus *Except a foolish one, daft (LGS:31)*
b) *Ai ba dama ka kushe ta,* *Certainly, you can't denounce it,*
Daga ko wane gu ka zo Legas *From wherever you come (to Lagos)*
c) *Waye da salo irin nata?* *who has the like of its structure?*
Alkarya babba sai Legas *A big city, Lagos (LGS:32and 44)*

The artist in the above verses, went further to showcase an example of the negative attitude of social belonging and political nationalism. The poet portrays the attitude of cherishing and respecting one's own nation as part

of good qualities of a good citizen. Rhetorically, the verses above, were inquiring on who could be bold enough to relegate and denounce the capital city of his nation, Lagos? It is only a big fool that could not be identified with such cherishing qualities and therefore act on the contrary, as actively proclaimed in the verses. Consequently, the poet further asserts that, none could be bold enough to do that on the capital city of his nation, Lagos, from wherever he comes. The artist also asserts that, no one could either denounce the structure, the life style, nor could he deny its influence over other States and other national capitals, except a big fool who lacks the nationalistic tendency. Invariably and rhetorically, the poet affirms that, everything in Lagos is adventurous and worth to be reckoned with and be proud of, by any good citizen of the nation.

2.6. Political

The poet, in the following verses, addressed some political issues, such as patriotism, worth noting in any prosperous society;

- a) *Bai ga Zulkarnaini ba, Wanda an yi shi tun gaba?*
Ko da ma bai gan shi ba, Ba shi ce bai ji ba,
Ya yi mulki duniya (*Dry:60*)

Had he not seen the Zoroaster,
who existed long before?
Even if he had not seen him, certainly,
he must heard of him, He ruled the world.

In the above verse, the artist highlights the devastating effects of political power, such as power drunk, self-importance, aggression and power tussle, in the perception of many societies. The poet here was rhetorically inquiring whether those who are power drunk in the community, did not see nor hear about Zoroaster (Persian powerful monarch), who has ruled the world. Even if they did not witness his rule, they could not deny hearing about his governance. On the same vein, had he (the power drunkard) not heard of Alexander (the great) of ancient Egypt, who has ruled and passed? They have all gone, as if they had not exist before? The artist was therefore making an inference to these two most powerful sovereigns, who ruled the world of their time (Zoroaster of Persia) and Alexander (the Great) who conquered ancient Egypt and even had a town 'Alexandria', named after him due to his power. That they have existed and passed away like any other mortal and therefore none could be immortal. Consequently, the poet asserts that, all and sundry, in the society, have a full knowledge of their sovereignty in the history of ancient civilizations of Macedon and Persia. But, to the dismay of the poet, they ceased to exist as they have never existed like any other mortal. So, the target readers would definitely think over and have a second thought over this historical reference and take heed of it as a model.

2.7. Socio-Moral

The artist in his quest to portray the exalted position of the Messenger of Islam (Muhammad (Pbuh)) has the following to say:

- a) *Sidi Muhammadu, in ba kai ba, Wane ne da isa gun Rabba? Xx (IRI:16)*
Sidi Muhammad, with the exception of you, who can reach the Palace of the Creator?

Furthermore, the poet, in his effort to persuade the target readers on the exalted status accorded to the Prophet of Islam and the yearnings of his exalted qualities, highlights one of the qualities that made him over and above all the messengers of Allah. In this regard, the artist in the above verse, rhetorically enquires that, with the exception of Muhammad (Pbuh), had there ever been any one in history, who had reached the exalted Throne of the exalted Lord? The poet therefore asserts that, of all the Godly exalted personalities in the history of the world, none was opportune and privileged to reach the exalted Palace of the Lord, except Muhammad (Pbuh). Here, the poet asserts that, non among the chosen personalities of God, even the Angels, were granted the prospect of reaching up to the Throne of God, except him alone and the only one. The attention of the target readers would therefore, be completely captured and consequently ponder upon it with all seriousness.

2.2. Interrogatives as Persuasive devices

The poet employs grammatical interrogatives as rhetorical questions to serve as thematic reiterating device in

his effort to get his message across the target readers as illustrated and exemplified above. In this section, the poet further employs the interrogatives as persuasive devices in his bid to draw the attention of the target readers and to persuade them to get his message through. The poet therefore, exploits three persuasive techniques; conversational, inferential and inquiring, to effectively win the attention of the target readers toward his message:

- i) **Conversational Technique:** according to Macmillan (2007:324), conversation piece is an interesting or unusual object that attracts attention and makes people start talking about it. In his bid to make his message more interesting in the minds of the target readers, he presented the issue of detracting personified world as *conversation piece*. This will help in making the subject unusual to attract their attention and make it the talk-of-the town. He therefore, presented it in a reported mood as seen in (2.1.3/a &b) above.
- ii) **Inferential Technique:** Macmillan (2007:773) posits that, it is a process of using information that you already have, to form an opinion about something. Here, the poet, in his bid to persuade the target readers, infers them to certain concrete historical situations, to enable them utilize their existing knowledge and information to form an opinion on the politically motivated deceptions, as exemplified in (2.1.6/a) above. The poet also employs the same technique to infer the target readers to another concrete historical fact regarding the social, moral and spiritual status of the Prophet of Islam as exemplified in (2.1.7/a) above.
- iii) **Inquiring Technique:** according to Macmillan (2007:780), it is the act of showing that you want more information about something. The poet at this juncture, in his bid to win the attention of the target readers, presents the questions in a form of seeking for more or additional information about the subject matters. For example: in verses (2.1.1/a,b,c) above, the poet enquires whether there is any other member of the society that lives a contentious life, commands and earns respect in the society as the educated elite. While in verses (2.1.1/d) above, the poet enquires for more information on how an ignorant, who could not even interpret his life situation, could be able to determine his future. The poet enquires in verses (2.1.1/e,f,g), on whether anything other than education could raise the banner of an individual or community in a society. Or whether a good social relationship could be maintained with an ignorant member/society or accorded any remembrance as a celebrity.

Finally, the poet prefers closed interrogatives in all the examples, with the exception of No. (2.1.1/e), where an open interrogative is preferred, to imply that, the poet is not an exception from the benefit of the prestigious status of education. But in examples (2.1.1/f&g), using closed interrogative forms, the poet employs this technique, as thought- provoking question, in his attempt to drag the target readers to ponder on who and who are relating well with an ignorant individual in the society and whether there may be any good legacy in the name of any ignorant member of a society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is understood that, the uniqueness of Akilu Aliyu in the effective manipulation of language and its stylistic usage, illuminates his literary compositions and get it across the target readers effectively. The paper uncovers his manipulative ability to employ interrogatives as rhetorical devices to highlight the significance of knowledge and the devastating effects of ignorance to an individual in particular and to a community in general. Apart from employing interrogatives as rhetorical devices, the poet also

employs it as persuasive technique in three peculiar patterns: *inferential*, where he effectively infers the target readers to concrete historical situations, which definitely arouse the interest of the readers to ponder into the inferred situations, or abreast their knowledge of the situation. Secondly, the poet effectively used interrogatives as *conversational technique*, especially where he symbolizes the worldly deceptions on some individuals, is really fascinating and thought-provoking. While in the third instance, the poet effectively utilizes the *enquiry technique* where

the target readers were influenced to dig-over for more information in their bid to get the message and its proper assimilation. Again, the poet's preference of *closed interrogatives* over the *open one*, clearly indicates the direct instruction to his target readers, which is more thought- provoking than relying on the open one, in such situations. But on the contrary, his preference for *open*

interrogative as exemplified in (2.1.1/e) above, was to effectively describe the all-embracing feature of educational prestige on all members of any community and in all times. Finally, uncovered by the paper, is the effective usage of *epideictic rhetoric* to display the praise worthiness of education/educated and the blame worthiness of ignorance/ignorant in any society and in all times.

References

- Abrams, Meyer, Howard. and Harpham, Geoffrey.Galt (2012). *A Glossary of Literary Terms (10th ed)*, USA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning
- Ahmed et al (2022): Rhetorical Tropes of Nationhood in Nigeria's Presidential Campaign Speeches, in *Journal of Languages, Linguistics and Literary Studies*, Owerri, Department of French, Faculty of Humanities, Imo State University. <https://jolls.com.ng/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/52-62.pdf>
- Ayodabo, Joel Olatunde (1997). A Pragma-Stylistic Study of MKO Abiola's Historic Speech of June,24,1993 as in Lawal, Adebayo (ed) (1997). *Stylistics in Theory and Practice*, Ilorin: Paragon Books Ltd.
- Alabi, Victoria, A. (1997). Scale and Category Grammar in Stylistic Studies, as in Lawal, Adebayo (ed) (1997). *Stylistics in Theory and Practice*, Ilorin: Paragon Books Ltd.
- Baldick, Chris (2004). "*Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*", New York: Oxford University Press,
- Bargery, George Percy (1993). "*A Hausa-English Dictionary and English-Hausa Vocabulary*", (2nd ed), Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press Ltd
- Crystal, David (1991). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (2nded), U.S.A: Basil Blackwell, Ltd
- Garba, Salisu (2011). "*Salon Sarrafa Harshe A Wakokin Akilu Aliyu*", an unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of African Languages and Cultures, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Garba, Salisu (2016). "*Gwarzon Mawallafa Wakokin Hausa: Tsokaci kan Akilu Aliyu*", a paper presented at an International conference organized by the Department of Nigerian Languages and Linguistics, Kaduna: Kaduna State University, from 2nd -5th June.
- Garba, Salisu (2019). "*Rhetorical patterns in selected poems of Akilu Aliyu*", a paper presented at the 31st National Annual Conference, organized by the Linguistic Association of Nigeria, held from 2nd to 6th December, 2019, at Abuja: University of Abuja-Nigeria.
- Junaidu, Ismail (1981). "*Ciza Ka Busa*", Nigeria: Longman Nigeria, Plc.
- Kolawole, Gboyega (1997). "The application of Linguistics to Literary Criticism: Controversy and Prospects", as in Lawal, Adebayo (ed), *Stylistics in Theory and Practice*, Ilorin: Paragon Books.
- Lawal, Adebayo (ed) (1997). "*Stylistics in Theory and Practice*", Ilorin: Paragon Books Ltd
- Leech, Geoffrey. (1968). "*A Linguistic Guide, to the Study of Poetry*", London.
- Macmillan, (2007). "*English Dictionary*", London: International Student Edition (2nd edit, New Edition), For Advanced Learners.
- Muhammad, Dalhatu (1977). "The Individual Talent in the Hausa Poetic Tradition. A Study of Akilu Aliyu and his Arts", London: an unpublished PhD Thesis, SOAS, London.
- Muhammad, Dalhatu (edit). (1978). "*Fasaha Akiliya*", Zaria: Northern Nigerian Publishing Company, Ltd.
- Pierce, Dann L. (2003). "*Rhetorical Criticism and Theory in Practice*", New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education
- Prasad, Terni (2009). "*A Course in Linguistics*", New Delhi: PHI Learning Private Limited,
- Stephen, Martin (2000). "*English Literature, A Student Guide (3rd ed)*", England, Edinburg Gate: Pearson Education Limited,
- Syal, P. and Jidal, D.V. (2001). *An Introduction to Linguistics: Language, Grammar and Semantics*, New

Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India, Private Limited,
Zulyadaini, Balarabe (1995). “A Linguistic Study of Poetic License in Akilu Aliyu’s Poetry”, an unpublished M.A Dissertation in the Department of Language and Linguistics, Maiduguri: University of Maiduguri.