The language of divination poetry: A case study of dibịa Njọkụ Nwọgụ

A. U. N. Nwankwere
Department of Linguistics
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
Anambra State

Abstract

Divination is an age-long and world-wide activity. It is the spiritual means by which the participants find out from the supreme deity the solutions to the puzzles above the ordinary human mind, through the gods or any other super human being with or without the use of paraphernalia (Okodo 1991). Through its language use, art and act, the whole psychosocial standing of the participants is exposed. From ancient times, Igbo people, like other peoples of the world, have not been left out of this practice. The same is applicable to Umuaro people. This paper discusses the language of Igbo divination, with particular reference to the divination poems of Dibịa Njọkụ Nwọgụ from Ụmụaro Ihiteọha in Mbụtụ Nweorie Autonomous Community of Abọ Mbaise L.G.A., Imo State. The following observations have been made about the use of pronouns in the language: (1) in Mbaise dialect, the third person singular pronoun ya has different variants: ya/ye, yị/yi according to context and harmony; (2) when this third person singular pronoun follows a word (noun, verb etc) the last vowel in that word changes to ị/i according to harmony rule, (3) this pronoun seems to function as a verb in some contexts, and (4) the plural counterpart ha has different variants, e.g. ha/he/hị/hi. Moreover, the paper identifies a few figures of speech that the language incorporates as well as archaic usages, modulations and phonoaesthetic features.

1.0 Introduction

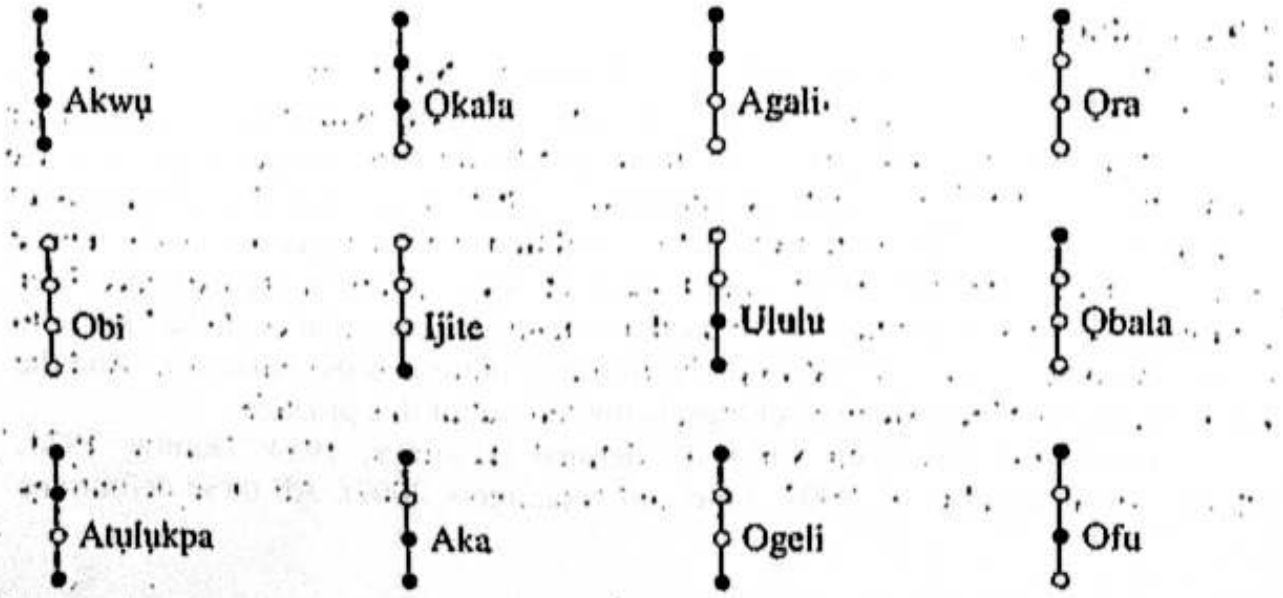
Language is the power-house of communication. Since creation, human beings have longed for and engaged in communicative activities with each other and even with super humans and spirits, in their quests for knowledge, especially, the knowledge of the future and the unknown. One of the well-known means of seeking this knowledge is the divination tradition, which is as old as the human society. Every natural society must have at some point in its existence been primitive and crude; and must have used unscientific means that could be likened to divination practices in the bid to probe into the future and the unknown. And the Igbo society, to which Mbaise belongs, is not left out of this practice.

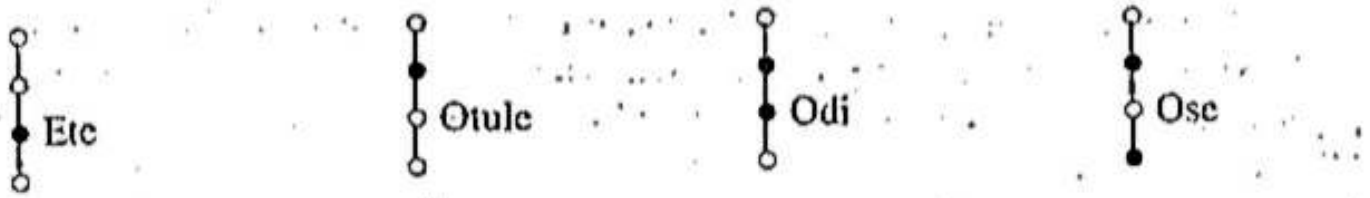
Divination has been variously defined (Hastings, 1954; Hornby, 1974; Okodo, 1991; Read et al, 2004; Eme and Nkamigbo, 2007). All these definitions

portray that divination is oral-based. However, as a genre of oral literature known as poetry, it is a different form of orality when compared to other oral discourse or folklore. Hence, it is called divination poetry. Divination poetry is condensed in terse language. This suggests that volumes are said in a few words. Again, it draws its strength from the language power perceived in its informative, educative, emotive, expressive, persuasive and directive purposes among others.

In the standard Igbo, divination is called ígbā áfa. But, Mbaise people call it ígbā àja. The person who performs the art and act is called díbịà áfā/díbịā àja; while, the god of divination is ágwù. In Igboland, there are different types of diviners (Onwuejeogwu, 1981:139). Most specialize in one type of divination. However, some others engage in more than one type of activity, such that the same dibịa can divine, carry out sacrifices, diagnose and treat diseases. This can explain to an extent why so much trust was and is still vested on them by the clients, and why they wielded untold powers in the society in the past, since they inspired great awe and were consulted on various issues.

Igbo divination poetry is the sacred language of the diviners. This can be captured by Umeogu's (2001) account of the **afa ugili**, which he defines as "... the very ear of silent and revealing intelligence with which Ugili seed shells communed with the noisy and exposy wisdom of the Tortoise". According to him, two foundational paraphernalia of **afa ugili** are the sixteen halved **ugili** seed shells, stringed in fours (see fig.1 below) and the tortoise shell, which serves as the container for the stringed **ugili** seed shells. He further explains that in divination when the **afa** is tossed into the air of spiritual and temporal probability there are only sixteen possible explanations and the falls of the halved **ugili** seed shells can be open or closed. These sixteen basic words are **akwụ, ọkala, agalị, ọra, obi, ijite, ụlụlụ, ọbala, atụlụkpa, aka, ogeli, ofu, ete, otule, odi** and **ose.**





Where • = closed and ○ = open.

Agreeing with this phenomenon, Ekwealor (1999:37) refers to the string of seeds as "afa chaplets". He uses the table below to illustrate them.

Afa	Ordinary Igbo	English
1. agalị/aghalị	Ikenga	Ikenga
2. aka	ijem/njem	journey
3. akwụ	ihe kwụ otu ebe	something standing still
4. atụrụkpa	ndị oyibo/akwa	Europeans/cloth
5. etc	ihe mbelede	sudden event
6. ijite	okpololo ezi	main road
7. ọbala	ihe dị n'ife	an unhidden object
8. obi/ogbi	ojije/ọgiga	movement
9. odii	nceli	midnight
10. ogele/ogheli	nwaanyị	women
11. ọkala	ihe kpọgala akpọga	astride; something wide
12. ọra	ụlọ	house
13. ose	anya	eye
14. otulc	okwu	speech
15. ovu	otu ihe	one
16. ụlụlụ	ihe kpọdolu akpọdo	hooked

Many Igbo scholars have made extensive studies of them (Okoreaffia, 1978; Onwuejeogwu, 1981; Nwala, 1985; Obasi, 1985; Igwe, 1988; Azuonye, 1990, Anny-Nzekwe, 1991). However, to the best of our knowledge, nothing has been published on the divination verses of Mbụtụ Mbaise, nay, Ụmụarọ Ihiteọha. This is the task this paper sets out to perform. Thus, the data used for this paper were collected from Dibịa Njọkụ Nwọgụ from Ụmụarọ Ihiteọha. Unfortunately, as the data were being collated, both Dibịa Nwọgụ and High Chief Innocent Obirieze Ọpara (Traditional Prime Minister) died. Chief Ọpara was my paternal uncle and acted as my guide.

In the following section, the language of Igbo divination illustrated with Dibịa Nwọgụ divination poetry is discussed. The poems used are attached to this paper as appendices. They are rendered and documented in the diviner's dialect, Mbaise Igbo. The tone-marking convention adopted in presenting them is that proposed by Nwachukwu (1995); where sameness is left unmarked and the second of two consecutive high tone marks indicate a downstep tone. Besides, the poems are glossed in English.

2.0 The language of Dibịa Nwọgụ poetry

According to Dibịa Nwọgụ, it is possible to have different poems for different occasions: for life and progress (Àja ńdù); to diagnose and recommend treatment for diseases (Àja Ńrịrịa). In this case, the one for a child is different from that of a woman or a man. There is a poem for a barren woman (Àja Nwáànyị Àga), as well as those for undertaking a journey (Àja Ónye Ijè); for preparing for the farming season (Ísù ọfọ́ or ịdū ishi, or ịdụ/ịnū mụ́ọ̄); against poison and charms (Àja ńshi là ọ́gwụ); for diagnosing or finding out the cause of death; for finding lost items, e.g. money, domestic animal. Nevertheless, due to space and time constraints, we are going to use only excerpts of three poems: "Àja Ńdù," "Àja Nwáànyí Àga" and "Àja Ńrịrịa Ọ́jọọ̄".

The communication is divided into sections: the chanting stage, where the diviner communes with the gods using all his paraphernalia. The language here is full of certain register difficult to understand. The recorded poems of Dibịa Nwọgụ are vocalized. There are many paraphernalia that give sound to his poems. His language is mostly quotidian, which the clients understood. However, it has certain register difficult to understand. This is more in the area of figurative and archaic usages, vocal/tonal and structural modulations; and such other colourings that are mystifying to the uninitiated, but help to add beauty to the language all the same. The language of divination is called "Òtíto àja" meaning 'the glory of divination'; 'the glorifying language of divination/the glowing tributes of divination'.

There are various praise names for the various spirits – land, air and water spirits, Lucifer and God the Creator – to cajole them to come to the aid of the diviner. This can be called exploring the resources in the language to create pleasure, and for other effects, as well as for creating neologisms. This portrays the language as sacred and/or sacrosanct, and comparable to the language of sacred scripts like Latin and Sanskrit, which are purely for religious worship.

2.1 Linguistic features

a. Archaic language

There are archaic words whose meanings are unknown or uncertain to the clients. They enrich the poems and make them original and sacred. However, people rarely use them today. Examples:

Láàwụ/láàbọ (àbúū) 'two' (Poem A: Ln. 1),
lá (ná) 'auxiliary verb' (Poem A: Ln.1),
èdele (èdegele) 'metallic, jingling bell (Poem A: Ln.16)
Ịkpā ụ́rùrọ (ítē ńzu) 'to apply white clay/local powder' (Poem A: Ln.23/24).
Ńgbarā miri (mírī mgba) 'collected rain water' (Poem B.Ln.3)
Mgbara (mbaráwọ̀) 'tadpole'
Mgbara (mgbágwirígwē) 'mosquito larva'
Ńjije (ákwà) 'wrapper' (Poem B:Ln.6)
Ùhú akā (íshi ǹtulu ákā/ǹku ákā) 'elbow' (Poem B: Ln.14)
Lá-èrókò (ná-ērè úrè) 'trying to please' (Poem B:Ln.18)
Àkwụkwa (ikwu) 'urse' (Poem B:Ln.26)
Ókechikp̄ọ̄rọ (óke ǹgwere) 'male lizard' (Poem B:Ln.27)
'Úkòm (ọ̀kụ́kọ̀) 'chicken' (Poem B:Ln.28)

b. Modulations

Modulation plays very important roles in the poems, as there were many changes from the normal ways of saying things. These include voice/tonal and structural modulations.

i. Voice modulation

The poems portray that the diviner had the knack of changing his voice intermittently, either to instruct, deliver a message, reiterate, make a statement with a tone of finality, etc. Sometimes, he assumed the position of his clients, who speaking through his voice did not say much. He mostly read their minds, or psyched them up and voiced out their feelings and worries. It was normal for him to start with incantations and showers of encomiums poured on the various spirits. This section is chanted. It is followed by the dialogue section, which was delivered in ordinary conversational tone. Sometimes, it was a monologue, with only the diviner talking, asking questions, proffering possible answers, etc. This section carries the message and is called 'Ìkè aja' 'Message delivery'. The diviner uses a mixture of tone here, and every poem has this part.

Poem A, from Ln. 18 to the end is delivered in this tone. Ln 18-22 involves an interactive session during which the client made some minor responses. Ln.23 is an instruction. Ln 24 and 25 sort of explain what the client's mother is going to do.

The tone here is like a dramatic monologue. Ln 26 to 29 is also dramatic, but the exact words the client's mother is to utter in her prayers. Finally, the diviner goes back to the tone he uses in Ln 24 and 25. All these are intended to achieve effects and heighten the tone of the poem.

In Poem B, Ln 8 to the end is rendered in this tone. Ln 8 and 9 are supposed to be stated by the present husband of the barren woman. From Ln10 to 20, the diviner narrates the genesis of the woman's problem. However, Ln 17-18 discloses the woman's present disposition. Ln 21 is the diviner's instruction to the client. Ln 21 to Ln 30 encloses the panacea in the message delivered in mixed tones. Ln 22-23 illustrates the woman's actions. Ln 24-27 is the supplications to be offered by the barren woman. In Ln 24 and 26, the diviner uses the third person singular in a kind of indirect speech; whereas Ln 25 and 27 are in direct speech as should be rendered by the barren woman. Ln 28 and 29 are the diviner's instructions. Ln 30 and 31 are his prayers for and blessings on the woman, and the client's concurrence.

Poem C, Ln 16 to the end contains the message. The client deduces that all is not well right from here. Ln 19 is emphatic and convincing of the fact. There is a tinge of annoyance in the diviner's voice as he is being expected to do the impossible. Thus, with a tone of finality he states the obvious in Ln 21-25. Ln 27-29 is his instructions to the client. Ln 30-31 is directed to the spirits, urging them to hold their peace.

Here, it is observed that the diviner is fully in control as he issues instructions and orders to both spirits and humans, thus exhibiting his powers.

ii. Structural modulation

Another type of modulation is structural modulation. It involves shortening the structure of a sentence as against what obtains ordinarily. In Poem A: Ln 13, 'jī' (from the verb (íjí – to use) is supposed to be a participle 'èjí' which should be joined to the auxiliary 'la-'. Again, Ln 26 is not the normal way of speaking. It literally means: "The road passes through spirits and humans". The normal structure is "Múò jī agá l'úzò, mádù jī agá l'ụzò/múō làmádù jī agá l'ụzò – (Both spirits and humans traverse/pass through the road). Another shortening of structure is Poem A: Ln.27 and Poem B: Ln 24 where 'na' is omitted. It was observed that this is a peculiar feature in Mbaise dialect. In the standard Igbo, Ln 24 would read: "sí nà yá nà-achózi nwā".

iii. Peculiar tonal feature

It is important to note that tone can function as a negative marker in this dialect as seen in Poem C: Ln 20. The diviner also employed tone to his own great advantage, sometimes achieving a dramatic monologue, sometimes alluding. Again,

the high and down-stepped tones play much more roles in the dialect and seem to be evenly inter-laced with the low tone, giving the dialect a musical rhythm.

iv. Pronominal modulation

It was observed that the third person singular pronouns 'ọ' and 'ya' perform peculiar functions or assume peculiar characteristics not only in the poems but in the dialect. In the case of 'ọ', it was observed that it occupies both the subject and object positions. It occupies the position of 'ya' in object position. Examples are Poem A: Ln 28, Poem B: Ln 19 and Ln 30..

In the case of 'yá' it was observed that it has two structures: 'yá' and 'yé' according to vowel harmony. Another interesting characteristic is that 'yá' can change the last vowel of the immediate preceding noun to 'i' or 'ị' according to vowel harmony. Examples abound in the poems, as in Poem A: Ln 3, 18, Poem B: Ln 9, 17. However, where that preceding word ends in double vowel like: ee/saa they are not changed to i/ị, e.g., Poem B: Ln 14. We also observed that 'yá' can be verbal suffix meaning 'nye' as in Poem A: ln.23. The standard form is "kụkọnyé" or "tìnyé" Also, in Poem B: Ln.11 it occurs:

A nakwanị egbugatị a gịrị? 'Is there any point sacrificing to rescue him from the hands of the spirits? (Poem C: Ln. 21). This question shows the futility of any rescue effort and suggests that the man is gone forever.

2.2 Stylistic features

i. Metaphors

Dibia Nwogu made capious use of metaphors. Example:

Nduri la (eji aga ije l'onwa) 'Dove that travels to the moon' (Poem B: Ln 2)

Ajaala di l' otile miri 'sand at the river bed' (Poem B: Ln 4)

Ugo dim ma 'Eagle, the beautiful one/lady' (Poem B: Ln 5)

Here, the mermaid is compared to the Eagle, which the Igbo consider as the most beautiful bird.

Okohia nwe nwa enwe 'forest that shelters the monkey' (Poem A: Ln 14)

Nwaanyi la-eji eji udele agba ugbo 'woman that rides on the wings of the vulture' (Poem A: Ln 6)

Utara miri ghuru ala anya 'rain drops that drill the earth' (Poem C: Ln 4)

ii. Idioms

Agbara ekukogideli e aka 'spirits are holding him tightly' (Poem C: Ln 17)

It is as if strong spirits are holding the man tight. This means that stronger forces have overcome him. Simply put, he is dead.

iii. Proverbs

The dibia made profuse use of proverbs. Many of the metaphors are proverbs because they have deep meanings. Example,

Onya huru, o'ji anu 'if a trap bends, it has caught a game' (Poem C: Ln.19)

This proverb appeared in a divination poem for a seriously sick man. It means that the man is dead. Here, the trap is death while the animal caught in the trap is the sick man who is dead.

iv. Personification

The poet also employed personification in his language. For example, in Poem A: Ln14 Okohia nwe nwa enwe; Okohia is personified, as if it were a human being that guards, protects and shelters his child (enwe). Also, in Poem A: Ln 11 Ngalaba uzo la-eji eri aja 'road junction that eats sacrifice' Ngalaba uzo 'road junction' is personified. Again, in Poem A: Ln 8- Nkukumiri gi la whe ghuru ala anya-flood water that drill the earth. Poem C: Ln 4 utara miri ghuru ala anya 'rain drops that drill the earth', both the 'rain drops/flood and 'the ground/earth' are personified. The ground has eyes, which the rain drops/flood literally removed with sharp implements. Finally, Mmumuwari, gi la whe miiri abali oku 'Glow-worm, you who illuminated the dark night' (Poem C: Ln12) means that the glow-worm gave light to the night. Here, the glow-worm and the night are personified.

2.3 Phonoaesthetic features

Phonoaesthetic features abound in the poems. They are employed to beautify them, though they appeal more to the ear than the eye. The features include alliteration, assonance, repetition, rhetorical questions, ideophones and symbolism.

i. Alliteration

Nwaanyi la-eji eji udele agba ugbo (Poem A:Ln16). Here, 'j' and 'gb' are alliterated. Mgbara miri mgbara di l' ime (Poem B: Ln 3) Here 'm' and 'gb' are alliterated. Mee je juoni ajuju ala juoro m ewi 'Do go and enquire for me about land from ewi 'bush rat' Poem B: Ln 7. Here 'j' is alliterated. Okohia nwe nwa enwe the sound 'nw' is alliterated.

ii. Assonance

There are examples of assonance in the poems, e.g. Onye mere eme jikweni eri eri, 'one who has worked hard deserves reward' (Poem A: Ln 21). The assonance here involves the vowel 'e' and 'i'. Also, in Poem B: Ln 28 puo upuru pufu ama 'draw lines with your feet from the compound to the road'. The assonance involves the vowel 'u'. Another is Na la nna anyi kara 'where and

where we said-As we have said it', (Poem B: Ln 30). Here, the assonance involves the vowel 'a'.

iii. Repetition

There are various types of repetition like word, and sentence repetition. Examples: words like ngwa ngwa, ubochi, ajuju, juo are severally repeated. Sentences like Je juoro m ajuju ala, juoro m ewi, all the praise names are repeated for poetic effect and emphasis. There are structural repetitions all over the poems, example PoemC: Ln 29 ibiri ukwu muo, ibiri ukwu madu; O wuni oto o jiri mee and O wuni whe e gala mee. Je lee ulo and je lee ezi

iv. Rhetorical questions

This is another phonoaesthetic feature used. Example, Ajuju efuole m ego, m gakwa iju odo? 'questioning has cost me money, will I ask/question again? (Poem A:Ln 12). Also, Poem A: Ln.9-10: O wu ehihi hiri ehu? (Poem A: Ln 12). Owu whe a whuru lanya turu ujo?

v. Ideophones

An ideophone is a device that combines idea and sound for effect. It is not easy to translate. An example is *'ọkwa' ike la-eji atụ 'la' chaa* Poem A: Ln. 8. The meaning of *chaa* is far-fetched; but the sound is exotic. It could mean wee hours.

vi. Symbolism

This is another figurative usage that abounds in *Dibia Nwogu's* divination verses. Let us draw examples from '*Aja Nwanyị Aga*'. In line 21: *ọgwụ ehiri*-"a collection of herbs tied specially in a round form" symbolizes the womb. Poem A: ln. 23 "*Akwụkwọ shi l'elu dazie*" symbolizes good omen, life, progress, etc. Poem A: Ln 20, cola is also symbolic of a special gift to one's mother more especially, giving back life to the person that brought life, as the Igbo say that one who brings cola brings life. In line 21 of Poem B *Ite ejureju ọnụnụ* 'a local pot signifies a fertile womb full of ovaries that bring forth many children. In line 27, *ụrọ ojii* 'humus soil' also signifies fertility. In line 28, *Nnekwu ukom* 'a hen' signifies a highly fertile woman that will bear many children like the hen. In line 22, *ụmụtakịrị ogbede* 'small children' symbolize the children she will bear.

3.0 Summary and conclusion

The paper examined the language of Igbo divination poetry, with particular attention to the divination verses of Dibịa Njọkụ Nwọgụ from Ụmụarọ Ihiteọha Mbụtụ Nweorie in Abọ Mbaise, Imo State. It observed that divination is a worldwide, age-long art and act, which can be said to be as old as man's life on earth, especially since the fall of man. To this effect, the language of divination, the poems of Dibịa Nwọgụ inclusive, is to a large extent archaic and mystifying, making it sacred and/or sacrosanct, and comparable to the language of sacred scripts like Latin and Sanskrit, which are purely for religious worship.

The diviner's language was heavily dialectal, as if he was never aware of any other dialect of Igbo. In addition he proved to be worthy of his profession by his profuse use of archaic words and figurative expressions. This also shows that diviners are custodians of the peoples' language. Again, being a master at home with the language and the art, various types of modulations were at his employ. We also found out that there is a special relationship, in Mbaise dialect, between the third person, singular and plural pronouns "ya/ha" and the noun immediately following or preceding them.

In conclusion, we are stating that among other reasons, for the richness and sacredness of the language of Igbo divination poems, they should be properly harnessed, set aside and recognized as the language of Igbo traditional religious worship. Consequently, they need to be well explored and properly documented for posterity and the whole world to see and learn from our rich linguistc endowment.

References

Anny-Nzekwe. P. 1991. Men who see tomorrow. *Daily Star, Feb. 32, 1991*, p. 11.

Azuonye, C. 1990. Kaalu Igirigiri: The Ọhafịa singer of tales. In Okpewho, I. (ed.) *Oral performance in Africa*. Ibadan:

Bascom, W. 1969. *Ifa divination: Communication between gods and men in West Africa*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press.

Clark, Keith (ed.) 1977. *The way: The living bible complete Catholic edition*. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers.

Dorson, R. M. (ed.) 1972. *Concepts of folklore and folklife studies*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Ekwealor, C. C. 1999. Towards the understanding of Afa divination language. In Amandianaeze F. Obi-Okoye (ed.) *A book of readings in language and literature for colleges and universities.* Maiduguiri: CESTA, 36-43

Eme, C. A. and L. Nkamigbo. 2007. Witchcraft in the Igbo society: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Knowledge Builders 2 (1)*, 117.

Goldstein, K. S. 1964. *A guide for field workers in folklore.* London: Folklore Associates.

Hastings, J. (ed.) 1954. *Encyclopaedia of religion and ethics.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark.

Hornby, A. S. 1974. *Oxford advanced learner's dictonary of current English.* Oxford: The English Language Book Society and Oxford University Press.

Igwe, O. 1988. *The content and functions of Eja divination chants of Akaeze.* Unpublished B. A. project report, U. N. N.

Nwala, T. U. 1985. *Igbo philosophy.* Lagos: Literamed Publications.

Obasi, J. N. 1985. *Linguistic and stylistic features of divination chants in Ekwerazu.* Unpublished B. A. project report, U. N. N.

Okodo, A. I. 1991. *A study of the divination poetry of the Igbo people of Ede-Oballa.* An M. A. project, U. N. N.

Okoreaffia, C. O. 1978. *Ibo oral literature and folklore.* Nsukka.

Onwuejeogwu, M. A. 1981. *An Igbo civilization: Nri kingdom and hegemony.* Benin City: Ethiope Publishing Corp.

Umeogu, B. 2001. Afa: The establishment of Igbo-African metaphysics from the logics and metaphysics of Obi and Akwu in the Afa mystical zero. *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities 3*, 160-173.

Voorhees, R. W. (ed.) 2004. *The new international Webster's comprehensive dictionary of the English language.* USA: Typhoon International.

Appendices

A: Àja ńdụ̀ 'Divination poem for success in life'

1. Ùkālááwụ. gbáanị ọsōnị 'Ụkalaawụ please come quickly'
2. M'éjē jụọ ajụjụ àla. júọ ē e le èl 'Let me go and enquire about the landoh, please!'
3. Ògbá àmá gbāra ńnī e 'Informant who revealed his own mother's secret'
4. Jè leé ụlò, jè leé ezī 'Go and investigate at home and abroad'
5. Ònyé nwē ishi ụkà? 'Whose case is it?/What is this case all about?'
6. Nwáànyi lá-ēji eji ùdele agbá ụgbō 'Woman who flies on the wing of the vulture'
7. Ígwe ojiī la-eji egbu àmụma 'Dark cloud that carries lightening'
8. Nkụkụmírī, gí lā whẹ ghụrụ àla ánya 'Flood, you that bore holes on the ground'
9. Ọ wú ẹhihi hīri chi? 'Is it an ill/evil omen?'
10. Ọ wú whẹ a whùrụ l'ánya tūrụ ụjọ? Is it something horrible and frightening to behold?'
11. Ńgalaba ụzò lá-ēji èrí àja 'Road junction that eats sacrifice'
12. Ájụjụ efūolé m ego oo, m gakwa ijụ ọdọ? 'Questioning has cost me money, will I be able to ask again?'
13. Kpọwára m agbàrá jī eri àja ehí Ēke 'Call for me the spirit that eats sacrifices on Eke day'
14. Ọkōhịa nwe nwa ènwe 'Forest that owns the monkey'
15. Ọkwa ìkē lá-ēji átū là cháa 'Great bush fowl that chirps at eerie h[illegible]'
16. Nwáànyị lá-èji ejí èdele agbá egwū 'Woman that dances with the metallic, jingling belt'
17. Jè leé ụlọ, je leé ezī 'Go and investigate at home and abroad'
18. Ńne mūrụ madụ la ńnì yá wū chi kpụrị ya nị 'One's mother and father are god who created him'
19. Ónye ahịā: É ē ni o 'Client: Yes, indeed'
20. Ígàkwa íwère ójị nye nnē gị 'You will give your mother cola'
21. Ónye mēre eme jìkwenị erí ēri 'One who has worked hard deserves to reap the fruits'
22. Ónye ahịā: ó wū oto ọ dì 'Client: You are right'

23. Wèté akwụkwọ shī l'élū dàzíé, kịkìíya ụrùrọ 'Bring a leaf that fell properly face upwards with and put white clay in it'

24. Yá abiā kpara ụrùrọ 'She will then take and rub some of the white clay'

25. Yá akpōkùó Chụkwu òkike 'She then beckons on God the creator'

26. Ůzò ji agára mūọ, àgára mādù 'Both spirits and humans trasverse the road'

27. Íri ūtùù, fri,ānyàsụ yá shùri, ó fùrull yé ọhja 'May Breakfast, supper she cooked not be useless for her'

28. Whé là whé nwa m nwá ā mēre ó dàzfere ō 'Whatever this child of mine does, let him prosper'

29. Yá ewèré nw' ọjī ahì táa 'She takes that cola and chews it'

30. Kpókùó Chilēkè 'And prays to God'

B: Àja nwáànyí Àga 'Divination poem for a barren woman,

1. Ògbá àma lée, gbaa ọsọ oo 'Revealer of secrets, please come quickly'

2. Ńdùrí la-ējì aga ijè l'ónwa –a-a 'Dove that walks on the moon/Dove that walks (comes out) once a month'

3. Mgbárā miri mgbará dì l'ímē lee 'Rain water full of mosquito larvae and tadpoles'

4. Ájaàlá dī l'òtiḷé mīri - i-I 'Sand at the river bottom / basin'

5. Ùgó dì mma lee 'Eagle, the beautiful one'

6. Òmá ńjije ónye nwūrụ anwụ –ụ-ụ 'One who ties/adorns herself with a dead person's wrapper'

7. Mèé jē juọnị ajụjụ àla júọrọ m ewi 'Do go and enquire about the land for me from rabbit'

8. Èé ōo, nwaànyfà, ọ gakwadị ímū nwa bàrá m urù? 'Yes indeed, this woman, can she ever bear a child and be useful to me'

9. Éjì m égo m jé lụrị yā 'I married her with my own money'

10. Ó wū Chụkwu 'The cause is from the mighty God'

11. Yá tụrụ imē, yá yità ọ nahí anìíya, ya afụ̀láhu 'If she takes in, it seems to progress, but suddenly she aborts it'

12. Nwáànyí à, ọ dịnị sà ọ màrana whe o mere 'This woman, she doesn't know what she did'

13. Ó wū whẹ ụ̀wa! 'It was in her former life'

14. Ó jìrí uhú akā kūọ átụrū. ḳúkwee yḛ̄ nwa 'She used her elbow on a pregnant sheep and it aborted its child'

15. ì húna sà dí nwaànyị a ná-àjúla onye kūkwere átụrū nwa 'You see, the then husband continued to ask about who hit the sheep that aborted its child'

16. Ò dị́ kè ọ́ là-ákà. 'She refused to speak/own up'

17. Nwáànyị gá hụ nwā, yá agā la-àgí yā, àgí yā 'Now the woman sees children and desires, and desires to have them'

18. Yá agā la-èróḳòrō ụmūtàkírị 'She becomes baby friendly, always trying to please children'

19. À dí nwaànyị sf Chukụu o chèré onye ē megbúru ō nị 'The then husband beckoned on Chukwu to curse the person who wronged him'

20. ó dịkwala èhi ó mùtara nwá 'He/she will never bear a child'

21. Wèté ọgwù éhìrí là ónụ ụgū tíī l'ìté òjujú òmụmụ 'Put fertility herbs, tendrils of pumpkin in a earthen fertility pot'

22. Ghée mkpụrū elìlí, ghée Mkpụrū ụkórò,ghàara ụmūtàkịrị 'Fry *ègúsi* and *ányu* seeds, throw them up, let them scatter for kids, on the ground'

23. Wèré péèni péèni chíị hī l'áka 'Give each child a penny'

24. Sí yà gà chọghọ nwá, à yà abịákwanna íhù ékpe 'Saying she now wants children, that she now begs for forgiveness'

25. Ò dínī ónye lūrọ ùwa mára whe o mere 'Nobody ever knows what he/she did in his / her former life'

26. Chukwu, o bikōnī wéfú àkwxkwa áhì 'Beg God to be merciful òmụmụ gá hìrí and remove the curse and make her children survive'

27. Hfikwạnị úrọ ojíī we ehì ſ sī a zùtára gī 'Here is the humus soil you said should be bought for you'

28. Wèté nnekwu ukòm gbíìri gí ìté èjuréjú òmụmụ 'Bring a hen, spill the blood into the fertility pot'

29. Á gà-ínyē hị ógū là asátō. 'They should be given twenty-eight pounds'

30. Ńá là nńa ányị kàra, ọmụmú bíārānī ó gà hìrí oo! 'As we have said it, let every child born here survive

31. Ónye ahjā/Nwáànyí àga: ìhá –ą-à! 'Client/barren woman: Amen. So be it'

C: Àja ónye nrịrịa ọjọ̀ọ̄ 'Divination poem for a seriously sick person'

1. Úkàlaàbọ, gbáanị ọsō ngwa ngwa-Ụkalaabọ 'Please hurry up, come quickly'
2. Ányị je jụọnị ajụjụ àla, júọnị ụbọchị 'Let us go and enquire about the land from the day'
3. Úbòchí Àfọ, úbòchí Nkwọ, úbốchí Êke 'Afọ day, Nkwọ day, Eke úbòchí Òrie day, Orie day'
4. Útarā miri ghụrụ àla ányа 'Rain drops that drill the earth'
5. Òkólòshi ónye Ụmūògị 'Okoloshi from Ụmūògị village'
6. Ò kara ótù lá-ējí eme àbúō 'One who promises one thing and does two'
7. Ọgádàzụ Úmūópara 'Ọgádàzụ from ụmụọpara village'
8. Àkaléfù gbáa ọsō ńgwa ngwa ányị lee 'Àkaléfù, please come quickly let us see'
9. Gí ụ̄ukwanị whe anyị kwòro jụwá ogù 'You are the cause of our justice'
10. Nwá ògbede ányа zùru mgbére 'The ubiquitous child'
11. Òkwą́ mbi gbáanị ọsō nị 'The stubborn one, please do come quickly'
12. Mmụ̀mụnwárī gí lą̄ whę́ mīịrị àbalị ókụ 'Glow worm, you who illuminated the night'
13. Díkē àma gbáanị ọsō nị-ị-ị 'Great revealer do come quickly, please'
14. Mkpụ̀rúmkpú`gbāra ọdịmá 'Earth worm that danced *ọdịmá* dance'
15. M màshie gī́ óbì íke 'Let me console you/Be consoled'
16. Éwù-u-u! ónye bāra órjà wá à ladị alá 'It's a pity! This sick person is definitely going'
17. Ágbàra ekúkògídeshieli yē áka ike 'Spirits are holding him very strongly'
18. Ndíkwànị, agadịnị yá hì ńhà? 'What should be done? Will they ever leave him?'
19. Ónyą̀ ĥúru, o jì ánụ 'If a trap bends, it has caught a game'
20. À sí gbugąa, gbùgaa, gbúgaa 'They say: Separate, separate, separate'
21. À nakwanị egbúgàta gịrī? 'Is there any gain in separation?'
22. Ó ńíla ụkwū là mírī àrịí 'He has already stepped into the river'
23. À nakwanị ekpétekwenị yē ekpete? 'Does this case have any appeal?'

24. Káshìrí, ò dídī mkpete dī ya nị 'Be consoled, there is no appeal at all'

25. Ó wūnị óto o jīrī mée 'It is exactly how it happened'

26. Ó wūnị whé è gála mee 'Now that this thing is happening'

27. Ágà ganị hị ịjī ókechikpōrọ, nwa ùriom 'They should now use a male lizard, a chick'

28. Pùó upùrụ púsù ámā. Making marks on the ground from the compound outwards to the road

29. Púsū ịbiri ùkwū mụọ, ìbiri ùkwū madù 'Drive and wipe away the numerous footprints of both spirits and humans'

30. Ágbàra, únù ewerēle onye kè únu kwòro bịá 'Spirits, you have taken the person you came for'

31. Whé a la-èkwokwe bée akwā ódọ y' emèkwele 'May any other thing that can cause mourning never happen'

32. Óto m shìri kwúo, ya wèré oto ò gaá 'May it happens as I have said it'

33. Ónye ahīā: ìhá -a-à 'Client: Amen, So be it'