

GENRE AND STYLE IN DRAMATURGY: SHAPING THE ART OF THEATRE*Xojanova Mexriyban**Assistant teacher**Dawilbaev Damir Polat uli**Faculty of Technography and Art Studies*

Abstract: In dramaturgy, **genre** and **style** are foundational concepts that shape the storytelling, tone, and structure of theatrical works. Genre categorizes a play based on its thematic content and broad conventions, such as tragedy, comedy, or drama, offering audiences an expectation of emotional engagement and narrative direction. Style, on the other hand, pertains to the specific artistic choices made in presenting the play, influencing how it is perceived and interpreted through performance, design, and language. This article explores how the interplay between genre and style not only defines the framework within which plays are created but also enriches the theatrical experience. By examining various genres and styles, the article highlights their importance in dramaturgical analysis, offering insight into how these elements guide both the creation and reception of theatrical works.

Keywords: Genre, Style, Dramaturgy, Theatre, Tragedy, Comedy, Drama, Farce, Musical, Experimental Theatre, Realism, Expressionism, Surrealism, Minimalism, Absurdism, Theatrical Convention, Narrative Structure, Thematic Content, Audience Engagement, Performance Art.

In the world of theatre, **genre** and **style** are two critical components that not only define a play's form and content but also shape the overall experience for both the creator and the audience. **Genre** refers to the broad classification of a play based on its thematic content, structure, and intended emotional impact. It provides a framework that helps the audience anticipate the mood, themes, and even the kind of narrative structure they might encounter. On the other hand, **style** pertains to the specific artistic choices made in how the play is presented, encompassing the way actors perform, the design of the stage, and the use of language or symbolism.

Both genre and style are not static; they can evolve and intersect in myriad ways to produce a wide variety of theatrical experiences. While genre offers a broad category like tragedy or comedy, style influences how those genres are conveyed—whether through realism, surrealism, or absurdism. Together, genre and style serve as the foundation upon which playwrights, directors, and dramaturges craft compelling, meaningful theatre.[1,34]

This article delves into the concepts of genre and style within dramaturgy, exploring how they shape the creation and reception of a play. By examining various genres, such as tragedy, comedy, and experimental theatre, and understanding the influence of different stylistic approaches like realism, expressionism, and absurdism, we can better appreciate the dynamic

interplay that underpins the dramatic arts. Understanding these elements allows both creators and audiences to engage more deeply with the power and beauty of theatre.

Genre serves as the foundational lens through which a play is understood. It is more than just a category; it provides a structure that influences both the content and emotional tone of the performance. In dramaturgy, genre acts as a blueprint that guides how a story is told and received by the audience. Below are some of the primary genres and their significance in shaping dramaturgical works:

Tragedy: Tragedy is a genre that focuses on the downfall of a central character, often due to their own flaws or decisions. These plays explore themes of human suffering, fate, and moral consequences. Tragedy is designed to provoke deep reflection in the audience, evoking emotions of pity and fear. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* are examples of classic tragedies that deal with complex characters confronting inevitable doom, ultimately leading to a cathartic experience for the audience.[2,56] For example: *Hamlet* is a classic example of a tragedy, where the protagonist's internal struggle leads to his inevitable downfall. Shakespeare uses the genre to explore themes of revenge, madness, and mortality. The **style** is grounded in Elizabethan drama, with heightened language, soliloquies, and poetic dialogue that deepen the emotional and psychological complexity of the characters. The **tragic** genre leads the audience through a series of intense emotional experiences, ultimately ending in the protagonist's death, a hallmark of tragic theatre.

Comedy: Comedy, by contrast, is a genre meant to entertain and elicit laughter through humorous situations, often revolving around misunderstandings, mistaken identities, or social conventions. Comedy creates a sense of relief and resolution, offering audiences a chance to laugh at life's absurdities. Plays like Molière's *Tartuffe* or Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* provide light-hearted entertainment while also subtly critiquing societal norms and human behaviors. As a comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* involves humor, mistaken identities, and romantic entanglements. The play's light-hearted plot and happy resolution are key features of the **comedy** genre. [3,67] **Style-wise**, the play incorporates elements of magic and fantasy, using elements of farce (slapstick humor) and romantic comedy. The interactions between the characters are exaggerated, and the fantastical forest setting serves as a surreal backdrop for the absurdity of love and misunderstanding. The **farce** and **magical realism** elements create a playful tone throughout the performance.

Drama: Drama as a genre typically focuses on serious, real-world issues, aiming for an emotional connection between the audience and the characters. Unlike tragedy, which often focuses on larger-than-life figures, drama deals with ordinary characters in situations that reflect real-life struggles and conflicts. Plays like Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* or Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* dive into the complexities of human emotion, personal failure, and societal pressures. For example: *Death of a Salesman* fits within the **drama** genre, focusing on the life and struggles of Willy Loman, a failing salesman trying to achieve the American Dream. The **realistic** style is evident in the play's portrayal of family dynamics, everyday struggles, and socio-economic pressures. The play unfolds in a very naturalistic setting, with its conversations and situations meant to reflect the challenges of real-life individuals. The use of symbolism (such as the frequent references to seeds and planting) also enhances the realism while reflecting on Willy's internal conflicts.

Farce: Farce is an exaggerated form of comedy that amplifies absurdity and physical humor. It often includes improbable situations, misunderstandings, and wild character antics. Farce is meant to entertain through over-the-top humor, and works like Feydeau's *A Flea in Her Ear* push

the boundaries of logic and reality for comedic effect. The genre's focus on physicality and far-fetched scenarios often challenges the audience's expectations of plausibility. For example: A Flea in Her Ear is a classic example of a **farce**, characterized by improbable situations, mistaken identities, and exaggerated character behavior. The play's chaotic plot involves a series of misunderstandings, such as a mistaken hotel rendezvous, which leads to physical comedy and outlandish scenarios. [4,87]The **slapstick** style emphasizes physical humor, pratfalls, and exaggerated gestures. The **absurdist** elements come through in how the characters are caught up in irrational and out-of-control situations, making the humor all the more outrageous.

Musical: The musical genre blends dialogue, song, and dance to tell a story. Music becomes an integral element in conveying emotions and advancing the plot, offering a heightened form of storytelling. Musicals like *Les Misérables* and *The Phantom of the Opera* showcase how songs can intensify emotional moments, making music an essential part of the dramaturgical experience.

Experimental or Avant-Garde Theatre: This genre breaks away from traditional structures and conventions. Experimental plays focus on exploring new forms of expression, often embracing abstraction, non-linear narratives, and audience interaction. Playwrights like Samuel Beckett and the Theatre of the Absurd embraced the genre to challenge expectations, producing works like *Waiting for Godot* that focus on the absurdity of human existence.

In dramaturgy, the interplay between **genre** and **style** is essential to understanding how a theatrical work is created and experienced. **Genre** provides the foundational structure of a play, guiding its thematic direction and emotional tone, whether it is a tragedy, comedy, drama, or something more experimental. It establishes the basic framework within which a story is told, influencing plot development, character arcs, and the intended emotional response from the audience.

On the other hand, **style** refers to the artistic choices that bring the play to life, influencing the way the narrative is conveyed through performance, staging, and design. It shapes how genre conventions are interpreted, whether through the realism of naturalistic settings or the surrealism of an avant-garde performance. The stylistic decisions in a play can transform the same genre into vastly different theatrical experiences, altering the emotional impact and audience engagement. By understanding the dynamic relationship between **genre** and **style**, we gain deeper insight into how plays work on both a structural and emotional level. The richness of theatre lies in its ability to blend these elements in innovative and creative ways, offering diverse and impactful experiences. Whether through the poignant realism of a dramatic piece or the whimsical absurdity of a farce, the thoughtful combination of genre and style ensures that theatre continues to evolve, challenge, and inspire audiences across cultures and generations.

Ultimately, genre and style are not just tools for categorization; they are integral components that shape the very essence of theatre, influencing how stories are told, how they resonate, and how they move audiences.

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