

THE DISCOURSE UNITS IN RADIO NEWS PROGRAMS IN IGBO LANGUAGE

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Abstract

News programs are a crucial aspect of radio broadcasting. However, existing studies on radio programming have largely neglected to explore discourse units in news broadcasts, particularly in Igbo language, one of Nigeria's major indigenous languages. This study investigates the discourse units in news programs in Igbo language. Data were recorded from seven radio stations in Western Nigeria, transcribed, and analysed. Based on the data, this study argues that discourse units in news programs in Igbo language include: news signature, announcing time, station identification, greetings, announcing date, self-identification, announcing headlines, news item in full, news commentary, public announcement, credit, and farewell. These features imbue Igbo radio news with a unique cultural flavour. Furthermore, the use and arrangement of these elements constitute a ritualistic pattern for news presenters in Igbo language radio. An absence or failure to use each of these elements in this established pattern renders the news presentation culturally unacceptable. This highlights the importance of adhering to traditional norms in Igbo language news presentation.

Key words: Radio, News, Discourse Unit, Igbo language

Ụmị edemede

Akukouwa di oke mkpa na mgbasaozi. Nchọcha ndi e mere gbasara mgbasaozi nke akukouwa n'asusu Igbo adikabeghi. Asusu Igbo bu otu asusu di n'obodo Naijiria. Orunchocha a, na-eleba anya na nkeji ihe ndi mebere akukouwa n'asusu Igbo. Njiede orunchocha a, si n' ulomgbasaozi redio asaa di na Naijiria. Nchoputa edemede a gosiri na ihe ndi mebere akukouwa a na-anu na redio n'asusu Igbo bu: egwu/olu njirimara ulomgbasaozi, ikwu oge mgbasaozi, ikwu aha uloozi akukouwa si abia, ikwu aha onye mọobu ndi ji akukouwa, isiokwu mọobu isiakuko, akukonuju, okwunaesoakuko, ozidiokemkpa, ekenendiuru, na keemesie. Ihe ndi gosiri na akukouwa na-asusu Igbo were etu e si eji ha aru oru, nke mere ka ndi na-ege akuko uwa si na akukouwa ezughi oke mọobu na o zuru oke. Nke a mere o ji di oke mkpa na a ga na-eso usoro e si e ji ihe ndi a aru oru n'ulo mgbasaozi obula a na-ako akukouwa n'asusu Igbo.

Okpurukpukwu: Redio, Akukouwa, Nkeji akuko, Asusu Igbo

1. Introduction

Radio news in Igbo language refers to news broadcast in the Igbo language across various radio stations in Nigeria. The term 'Igbo' refers to both the language and the people of the South-East and parts of the South-South geopolitical zones of Nigeria (Obiorah 2021). The Igbo people are the third largest ethnic group in Nigeria, following the Hausa and Yoruba. Although several radio stations in Nigeria broadcast in Igbo language, few allocate sufficient time for Igbo language news broadcasts. News broadcasting is a crucial component of radio programming in any language. According to Montgomery (2007) news programme can be defined as “the studio based-elements of the news, at the core of which are headlines and the kernels of news items, but which also includes opening and closing the programme, shifting the plane discourse from kernel to subsidiary elements, and back again as well as interviewing correspondents and other figures whose discourse contributes to the overall news broadcast.” News programs in radio broadcasts comprise several overlooked components, which have been largely neglected, particularly in the context of Igbo language broadcasting. A growing body of literature exists on the sociolinguistic study of Igbo language in broadcast programs, focusing on translation, language use, language vitality, and promotion (Okudo & Ifeagwazi, 2013; Nnaji, 2015; Nwammuo & Salawu, 2009, 2017). Nevertheless, studies on discourse units in radio news programs are limited. The omission of discourse units, which form a complete ritual of news programs, represents a significant knowledge gap. This study aims to address this knowledge gap.

2. Background of the Study Area

Discourse units are linguistic elements that operate above the sentence level, possessing a semantic representation (Van Dijk, 1988). News presentation involves combining discourse elements that are not necessarily news content, but are integral to the news program (Montgomery, 2007). In other words, news dissemination relies on the strategic use of coordinated discourse units to convey current information. For instance, discourse units such as salutations, station identification, self-identification, and farewells are integral components that, although not news contents themselves, are consistently present in news programs. The combination of discourse units in a news discourse creates what Van Dijk (1988) termed the macrostructure of a text, which forms the narrative schema of the text. As a result, listeners may perceive the news presentation as incomplete or inconclusive if any unit is omitted. Discourse units combine with organized information in a structured manner to form a comprehensive news presentation. Similarly, in written news, linguistic constituents are essential components of news presentation. For instance, in Nigerian newspaper reports on football matches, a structured format is typically followed, as noted by Olagunje (2015). This format begins with the title, followed by the preamble, online thesis, and its subsequent expansion.

According to Adesina and Olufunke (2017), Nigerian newspaper articles typically feature obligatory linguistic units in a sequential order, including headlines, orientation, and addressing the issue. These elements may be accompanied by optional features, such as feature leads, proposed solutions, and moral lessons. Similarly, in Radio Nigeria's news commentary, linguistic elements are sequentially arranged, including introduction of anchors, orientation, highlighting, and resolution, optionally followed by commentary lead, problem cause, and solution (Agbeleoba 2019). Research by Olagunje (2015), Adesina and Olufunke (2017), and Agbeleoba (2019) demonstrates that discourse units constitute the macrostructure of news reports, both oral and written, as proposed by van Dijk (1988) and Montgomery (2007). Montgomery (2007) suggests that oral news presentation involves distinct stages, each characterized by specific discourse units. The inclusion of specific discourse units at each stage is determined by their purpose, which is contextually sanctioned. Montgomery (2007) analyzed oral news data from the National Broadcasting Cooperation, British Broadcasting Corporation Scotland, and Network News United Kingdom to illustrate the fundamental discourse units in the organization and structure of news broadcast programs.

Montgomery (2007) posits that a news broadcast program follows a structured format, comprising a beginning, middle, and end, with multiple discourse units potentially occurring at each stage. Montgomery (2007) suggests that news bulletin programs initiate with a news opening signature, which may be visual or auditory, preceded by an announcement or a distinctive tune. This is followed by station identification, newscaster introduction, and time announcement, and subsequently followed by news headlines, which may include an optional signature. The program concludes with the presentation of news items, a closing visual or signature, reprise, and farewell. Additionally, the closure may be followed by a trailer announcing an upcoming program. This study aims to investigate the discourse units that comprise a comprehensive radio news program in Igbo language. This study also seeks to provide empirical evidence supporting the notion that diverse texts, despite varying forms, can be categorized within a specific genre due to their close associations. Certain elements are deemed essential, whereas others are discretionary. These elements also occur in sequential and recursive patterns. Broadcast news elements are explicitly structured, unfolding as predictable sequences of discourse units, with each unit distinct from the others, as noted by Montgomery (2007). In other words, a news genre comprises a structured set of discourse acts, where smaller units coalesce to form a cohesive news presentation. This study will draw on this theoretical framework in analyzing and presenting the data.

3. Methodology

Data for this study was recorded from different research visit to the states where the radio stations are located. The seven stations are:

- i. Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS) Awka, in Anambra State.
- ii. Enugu State Broadcasting Service (ESBS) Enugu in Enugu State.

- iii. Radio Nigeria Enugu in Enugu State.
- iv. Ebonyi State Broadcasting Corporation (EBBC) Abakiliki in Ebonyi State.
- v. Orient FM Owerri in Imo State.
- vi. Broadcasting Station of Abia (BCA) in Abia.
- vii. Bond FM Lagos.

The stations were selected using purposive sampling from various states where Igbo is predominantly spoken as a first language, including Lagos, which serves as Nigeria's commercial hub. The selection criterion was that each station allocates a minimum of 10 minutes to Igbo news daily. The data reveals that the selected stations have the following number of newscasters: ABS (8), ESBS (8), Orient (8), BCA (8), EBBC (8), Radio Nigeria (8), and Bond FM (4).

Station	No of Bulletin	Time Alloted to Each Bulletin	Total
ABS	6	30	180
Radio Nig	6	15	90
ESBS	6	30	180
EBBS	6	15	90
Bond FM	6	10	60
BCA	6	30	180
Orient FM	6	30	180

Table 1: the selected radio stations and time allotted to news session

The breakdown of these hours reveals six 30-minute news bulletins for ABS Awka, EBBC, Orient FM, and BCA, totaling three hours per station. Whereas ESBS and Radio Nigeria had six 15-minute bulletins, totaling one hour and 30 minutes per station, Bond FM had 60 minutes of recordings for six news bulletins. The time difference stems from the bulletin duration: 30 minutes for ABS, EBBC, Orient FM, and BCA, and 15 minutes for ESBS, Bond FM, and Radio Nigeria. The total recording time is 960 minutes. Data collection involved using a mini recorder in a quiet environment near the stations during research visits from 2021 to 2022. The recorded data was transcribed, and the discourse units within the news bulletins were analysed. The findings are presented below in a logical order.

4. Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

The Igbo radio news program consists of three stages, each comprising specific discourse units. The opening stage features the following discourse units: news signature, time announcement, station identification, greetings, date announcement, self-identification, public announcement, and news headline. These elements typically occur at the outset of the news program. The main news segment follows, comprising the news body, which includes greetings, news headlines, public announcements, and commentary. Additionally, commentary may appear during the news closure. The news closure segment follows the main news, typically including a repeat of the news headline and public announcement (if applicable), credits, news commentary, and a farewell message. The transitions between these segments are not explicitly marked by conjunctions or linking phrases, instead relying on the presenters' creative discursive abilities. Each station presents the discourse units in a structured, formulaic composition, linking discourse units together, as noted by Montgomery (2007). They are presented below:

4.1. News signature

A news signature is a unique sound, music, or expression specific to each Igbo radio news station. It serves as the station's identifying feature. News signatures are exclusive to news broadcasts. In nearly all selected Igbo radio news stations, except Bond FM Lagos, the news signature is the first notable linguistic element. This is largely due to the limited Igbo-language

news airtime on Bond FM. The composition and frequency of news signature tunes differ across stations. Orient FM and Radio Nigeria used sound alone as their news signature, whereas ABS, ESBS, EBBC, and BCA used a combination of sound and music as their news signature. The song lyrics primarily contain station identification, which will be discussed in a subsequent section. The summary of variations in the use of news signature in Igbo radio news is presented in the table below:

Station> Position of occurrence.	ABS	RD NIG	ORIENT FM	BCA	ESBS	EBBS	BN D
Beginning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Middle	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
End	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Table 2: News signature tune in Igbo radio news.

As illustrated in the table above, BCA and EBBC are the only stations that use news signatures three times in a single news bulletin, specifically at the news opening, middle, and closure. In contrast, ABS, Orient FM, Radio Nigeria, and ESBS use news signatures only at the news opening and closure. News signatures at the beginning of the news signal the start of the news hour. Middle-occurring news signatures function as fillers or transitions to other communicative events, and final signatures are used to conclude the news program. News signatures hold significant stylistic and functional value in Igbo news. They establish a distinct identity for each station's news program, capture the audience's attention, and contribute to the structured daily scheduling of events at each radio station.

4.2. Announcing time

The announcement of time marks the first instance where the newsreader's voice is heard in Igbo radio news presentations. It constitutes the second vital element in Igbo radio news programs. Time is announced only once in each Igbo news bulletin, typically immediately following the news signature. The announcement of time is crucial, as it informs the audience of the current time of day and helps them anticipate news broadcasts on subsequent days. In this study, Igbo radio news presenters across various stations consistently announced the time. Examples are captured in the excerpts below:

- (1) *Ọ kụọla elekere iri.*
'It is 10am in the morning' **ABS**
- (2) *Ọ jirilari ọkara wee gata elekere iri.*
'It is half past 9 (am)' **EBBC**
- (3) *Elekere abụọ akụọla*
'It is 2 O'clock' **Bond FM.**
- (4) *Ọ kụọla elekere itoolu.*
'It is 9 O'clock' (am) **ESBS**
- (5) *Ọ kụọla elekere asaato*
'It is 8 O'clock' **BCA**
- (6) *Ọ kụọla elekere iri.*
'It is 9 O'clock' **Orient FM**
- (7) *Ọ jirila nkeji abụọ ga elekere abụọ nke ehiehie.*
'It is 2 minutes past 2pm' **Radio Nigeria**

The data above illustrate the varying times for Igbo-language news broadcasts across different radio stations. For instance, EBBC and ESBS schedule their Igbo-language news broadcasts in the morning, at 9 am and 10 am, respectively, as evident in examples 2 and 4. In contrast, Bond FM and Radio Nigeria air their Igbo-language news broadcasts in the afternoon (see examples 3 and 7). Orient FM, however, broadcasts its Igbo-language news in the evening. Notably, stations like ABS, EBBC, ESBS, BCA, and Orient FM offer Igbo-language news broadcasts

in both morning and evening slots, whereas others, like Bond FM and Radio Nigeria, only broadcast in the afternoon.

4.3. Station Identification

Station identification is the process by which a news presenter announces the name of the radio station broadcasting the news. Typically, it occurs at the beginning of the Igbo news broadcast, immediately following the time announcement. Igbo radio news employs various methods for station identification. This may involve using the station's full name, as seen in Radio Nigeria and Bond FM, or by using abbreviations, such as ABS (Anambra Broadcasting Service), EBBC (Ebonyi State Broadcasting Corporation), and ESBS (Enugu State Broadcasting Service). The stations' frequencies, including 88.9, 88.5, 94.5, 88.1, and 96.1, along with the station's location, such as Awka or Umuahia, are appended to the station's full name or abbreviation. This differentiation distinguishes one station from another. The primary purpose of station identification is to authenticate the radio station and establish its credibility with the audience. The samples of station identification from various radio stations in this paper are: (i) **ABS 88.9 FM Awka**, (ii) **88.5 bond FM**, (iii) **94.5 Orient FM**, (iv) **BCA 88.1 Umuahia**, (v) **Radio Nigeria Enugu**, (vi) **EBBC Salt FM**, (vii) **ESBS FM 96.1**

As shown above, ABS, EBBC, and ESBS used abbreviations and frequencies to identify their stations, whereas BCA and ABS included their stations' locations. In contrast, Radio Nigeria, Bond FM, and Orient FM used their full names for station identification. Variations occur in the frequency of station identification across different stations. Bond FM, ESBS, and Radio Nigeria feature station identification twice during their news broadcasts. In contrast, ABS, EBBC, Orient FM, and BCA feature station identification three times. In the latter case, station identification occurs before the news headline, is repeated between the main news segments, and finally occurs after the main news. Whereas in the former case, station identification occurs at the beginning and near the end of the news broadcast.

4.4. Greetings

In addition to making the audience aware of the presenter, greetings serve as a strategic tool for Igbo radio news presenters to establish a positive relationship with the audience. Greetings facilitate transitions between different communicative events. Typically, greetings occur at the start of the news broadcast. However, greetings may also be used as fillers in various communicative events throughout the radio news program, particularly during the midpoint of the news presentation. This study identified various greeting samples in Igbo news, reflecting different times of day and the newsreader's friendly demeanor towards the audience. They are as follow:

- (8) **Ndeewonu** 'Welldone everyone' **Bond FM**
- (9) **Kee ka unu mere?** 'How do you do?' **Orient FM**
- (10) **Ututu ọma.** 'Good morning' **EBBC**
- (11) **Ọha na eze ndi ọma ndeewonu.** 'Greetings all' **BCA Umuahia**
- (12) **Ndeewo onye ọma na-ege nti.** 'Hello my good listeners' **Radio Nigeria**
- (13) **Ekene m gi onye ọma m ji eme ọnu** 'Greetings my good listeners' **ABS**

The greetings mentioned above are familiar to the audience, being a common practice among Igbo speakers. As greeting is an integral part of Igbo culture, its inclusion as a discourse unit in Igbo radio news is not unexpected. In addition to appearing at the beginning of the news, greetings also occur towards the end. Occasionally, news presenters incorporate a final greeting within the farewell segment. A common practice in Igbo radio news is for newscasters to use pronominal plural markers when greeting a perceived large audience, whereas when addressing a single person, they use a singular pronoun.

4.5. Announcing Date

Date is a crucial linguistic component in Igbo news broadcasts. Typically, in Igbo speech settings, dates are expressed using the traditional four-day Igbo week, followed by the month and the current calendar year. The four days in the Igbo week are Eke, Orie, Afo, and Nkwọ. In the Igbo calendar, the term 'onwa' represents the month, which is then counted numerically. The Igbo months are:

- onwa mbu (first month)
- onwa abuo (second month)
- onwa ato (third month)
- onwa ano (fourth month)
- onwa ise (fifth month)
- onwa isii (sixth month)
- onwa asaa (seventh month)
- onwa asato (eighth month)
- onwa itoolu (ninth month)
- onwa iri (tenth month)
- onwa iri na otu (eleventh month)
- onwa iri na abuo (twelfth month)

The twelve calendar months, from January to December, are represented in Igbo radio news. However, Igbo radio news presenters often combine Igbo and English when stating dates, as illustrated in the examples (14) to (19) below:

- (14) *N'akuko uwa n'uhuruchi taa bu Fraidee Nkwọ, abanị iri abuo na isii n'onwa nke ano n' afo puku abuo na iri na itoolu*
 'In today's world news, this evening, being Friday, Nkwọ, 26th day of the fourth month in the year 2019' **ABS**
- (15) *N'akuko uwa n'uhuruchi taa bu Satudee ahia Nkwọ ma buru mkpuru abali ano n'ime onwa ise, onwa Mee, na afo 2019.*
 'This evening of Saturday, an Nkwọ market day, the 14th day in the month of May 2019'. **EBBC**
- (16) *N'akuko uwa n'uchichi taa bu ubochi Wenesidee, abali iri abuo na ise, nke onwa a bu onwa Desemba nke afo bu puku abuo na iri na itoolu ma buru ahia afo.*
 'In today world news, in this night being Wednesday, 25 (day) of the month of December in 2019, being afo market day'. **Orient FM**
- (17) *Abali taa bu ahia Nkwọ, iri abali abuo na ise nke onwa Ekeresimesi nke afo a bu 2019.*
 'Tonight, Nkwọ market day, 20th night, in the month of Christmas, in the year 2019'. **BCA**
- (18) *N'akuko uwa n'ubochi taa bu Satodee ahia nkwo, iri mkpuru abali ano n'onwa April 2019.*
 'Today is Saturday, Nkwọ market day, 21st night of April, 2019'. **Bond FM**
- (19) *Taa bu Saturday ahia orie, abali iri na ano n'ime onwa asaa nke afo 2020.*
 'Today is Saturday, Orie Market Day, 24th night in the seventh month in 2020'. **Radio Nigeria**

Based on the samples (14) to (18), the news date typically begins with the announcement of the time of day, such as 'uhuruchi taa' (early evening) and 'ututu taa' (morning), as seen in ABS and EBBC. Next, the English names of the weekdays are announced, including Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. This is followed by the corresponding Igbo weekday name, corresponding to one of the four days in the traditional Igbo week

mentioned earlier. The Igbo name for the month is then announced, along with its corresponding numerical value. Some newscasters also include the English name of the month before announcing the year. Igbo newscasters typically announce both the day and month in both Igbo and English. Additionally, festive names like Easter and Christmas are increasingly being used to identify months in Igbo news programs. This pattern is now being used in Igbo radio news, where Christmas and Easter are used to refer to the fourth and twelfth months, respectively. Specifically, the fourth month is referred to as *Onwa Easter* or *4th Month*, while the twelfth month is referred to as *Onwa Christmas* (December). It is clear that code-switching is a common practice in announcing dates in Igbo radio news programs, as evidenced by its presence across all stations. This code-switching phenomenon employed by news readers represents an innovative approach that acknowledges the bilingual nature of Igbo media. Notably, the structure of dates in Igbo follows a specific pattern. This study identifies the following structural patterns in the composition of dates in Igbo radio news:

- i. **ABS:** Period of the day in Igbo, name of day of the week in English, name of the day of the week in Igbo, number of night and number of month in Igbo, name of the year in Igbo.
- ii. **EBBC:** Period of the day in Igbo, name of the day of the week in English, name of the day in Igbo, the number of nights in the month in Igbo, the number of the month in Igbo, the name of the month in English, and name of the year in English.
- iii. **Orient FM:** Period of the day in Igbo, name of the day in English, number of days in Igbo, number of the month in Igbo, name of the month in English, name of the year in Igbo, and name of the day in Igbo.
- iv. **BCA:** name of the day of the week in Igbo, the number of nights in the month in Igbo, name of the month using Christmas Festival (*Ekeresimesi*), and name of the year in English.
- v. **Bond FM:** day of the week in English, name of the day in Igbo, number of the night in a month in Igbo, number of months in a year in Igbo, name of month in English and, the name of the year in English.
- vi. **Radio Nigeria:** name of the day of the week in English, name of the day in Igbo, number of nights in Igbo, number of the month in a year in Igbo and, the name of the year in English.
- vii.

The arrangement of date elements reveals (although there are restrictions which is beyond this paper), the year cannot precede the month and day. The origin of this practice is not clear however, it likely stems from the need.

4.6. Self-identification

Self-identification is a linguistic act that allows Igbo news presenters to introduce themselves to the audience by stating their name. This self-identification process also occurs during news commentaries. An example of self-identification from various radio stations are presented in (20) to (26).

(20) *Okọ akụkọ bụ E. U.* ‘The newscaster is E. U.’ **ABS**

(21) *Onye i na-anụ onu ya n’akụkọ uwa nke abalị a bụ mụ O. O*
‘The person whose voice you hear tonight is me O. O.’ **SALT FM**

(22) *Oko akụkọ bụ N. E.* ‘The newscaster is N. E.’ **Bond FM**

(23) *Ndị jị akụkọ taa bụ E. N na* ‘The news bearer today is E. N and...’ **BCA**

(24) *Okọ-akụkọ nke ụtụtụ a bu mụ. A.A*
‘The newscaster this morning is me. A. A.’ **Orient FM**

(25) **Abụ m N. O.** 'I am N. O.' **ESBS**

(26) **Onye ji akụkọ n'ụtụtụ taa bụ O. O.**
'The news bearer tonight is O. O.' **Radio Nigeria**

Self-identification plays a crucial role in Igbo radio news and typically occurs at least once or twice. It typically occurs at the beginning and end of Igbo radio news broadcasts. The newscaster's full name (first and last) is required. In cases where correspondents or commentators are involved, the news presenter introduces both the respondent and the news commentator by their full names before handing over to them. When there are multiple newscasters, the plural marker 'ndi' (meaning 'the people') is used, whereas a single newscaster is referred to using the singular marker 'onye' (meaning 'the person').

4.7. Announcing News Headlines

Headlines indicate topics and give the audience an idea of what the main news items are all about. They are precursors to the main news. The news headline is referred to in Igbo language news as either *isiakụkọ* or *isiokwu* (main topics). News headlines occur in all stations in Igbo news. Samples of news headlines are presented below from Orient FM and Bond Fm:

(27) **Donald Trump ga-esepụ isi mba U.S. na iwu na-ejikwa etu e si agbagide azụmahịa na ngwa ọgụ na mba ụwa.**
'Donald Trump will withdraw U.S from regulations that guide world trade and conflict resolutions' **Bond FM**

(28) **Ọkwanaeso akụkọ nke taa di atọ, nke mbu ga-ekwu banyere ụzọ ekwesighi ekwesị eji mee mmeme ekeresimasi, nke abụọ ga-ekwu....** 'Topics of news commentary are three, the first will speak about the wrong ways to celebrate Christmas, and the second one will be....' **Orient FM**

As shown above, Igbo news headlines are complete expressions presented in various sentence structures that maintain suspense for the main story. A key characteristic of news headlines is that they always precede the main news. The news presenter presents the news items in the headline sequentially, without interruption. The number of news headlines varies across stations, typically ranging from three to five. This study reveals that the number of headlines never exceeds the number of main news items. In some cases, news headlines may only appear at the beginning and end. Occasionally, the news presenter may recap the news headlines before breaking for public announcements or advertisements.

4.8. News Item in Full

In Igbo radio news, a news item in its entirety is referred to as *akụkọ n'uju*, meaning 'news in full'. This constitutes the main body of the news, providing detailed information on each news item announced in the headlines, as well as those not mentioned in the headlines. News in full is introduced as follows:

(29) **Tọọ ntị n'ala ka I nụrụ akụkọ ụwa n'uju.** 'Listen to the news attentively.' **ABS**

(30) **Akụkọ n'uju, ka anyị buru ụzọ kọrọ gi ihe mere na steeti a.**
'News in full, we bring you news from the state first.' **ESBS**

(31) **Ngwa tọọ ntị n'ala ka m kọrọ a akụkọ anyi ha.**
'Now listen to our news in full.' **Bond fm**

(32) **Ugbua nụrụ akụkọ ndị anyị jiri bia n'uju.**
'Now listen to our news in full.' **Radio Nig**

(33) **Gerezienu akụkọ ụwa ndị a na ndị ọzọ ka ọha n'uju**
'Listen to the world news and others in full.' **EBBC**

- (34) *Anyị nọ n'oge akụkọ ụwa na BCA Umuahia gerenu akụkọ ndi anyị jì bịa*

‘We are in the time of world news in BCA, listen to our news’ **BCA**

In Igbo news, the 'news in full' segment is a mandatory discourse unit. A news headline always accompanies a news item in full. The number of main news items always equals or exceeds the number of news headlines. In all instances, the headline news is presented first. News headlines may also appear intermittently throughout the main news or after its conclusion, although this is not always the case. The main news segment does not have a fixed time allocation; however, it typically occupies more than half of the overall news broadcast time.

4.9. News Commentary

News commentary is another essential component of Igbo radio news. In Igbo, news commentary is referred to as **okwunaesoakụkọ**. The term **okwunaesoakụkọ** literally translates to 'speech that accompanies the story' in Igbo. Igbo news may feature one or multiple news commentaries. News commentary offers insightful and interpretive analysis of events with significant social implications. Through news commentary, current social developments are analyzed from multiple perspectives, enabling a well-informed stance. The specific mechanisms by which news commentary provides insights, analysis, and informed perspectives on events are outside the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, news commentary constitutes a key discourse unit in Igbo radio news. News commentary is introduced in the following ways:

- (35) *N'okwunaesoakụkọ nke na-eso ugbua bụ K. A. bu nwa afọ obodo ahụ kwuru na ya abụ ogbakọ ekpere ga bu nke ike di egwu ga ejuputa na ya.... Yabụ okwunaesoakụkọ bụ K A dere ya ebe O. A., tughariri ya ma guputa ya n'asụsụ Igbo.*

‘The news commentary today was written by K. A., an indigene of the town. According to the writer, the gathering for prayers is expected to be full of power and glory.... The commentary was written by K. A. It was translated to Igbo and read by O. A.’ **ABS**

- (36) *Yabu okwunaasoakụkọ nke gbadoro ụkwụ na ..bụ A A dere ya, ebe B. U tughariri ma guputara gi ya n'asụsụ Igbo.*

‘The news commentary which is based on ...was written by A.A., while B. U. translated and read it out in Igbo’ **BCA**.

News commentaries are typically presented by a news presenter distinct from the main newsreader. On occasion, a news presenter may present multiple commentaries. Regardless of the number of commentaries, the main news presenter's role is to introduce the commentary reader. In the rare event that the commentary reader and main news presenter is the same person, in this case, the news presenter does not introduce themselves again. In Radio Nigeria, ABS, and Orient FM, news commentary is presented once after the main news, typically in a pre-recorded format. At ABS, the news commentary follows the farewell segment. In contrast, Orient FM presents its news commentary before the final news headlines.

4.10. Public Announcement

Public announcement is known as **ozi puruiche** (special message) or **ozidiokemkpa** (important message) in Igbo radio news programme. It is a special message meant for the public. Samples of public announcement are:

- (37) *Nchekwa ndụ na akụnụba na steeti a dum bụ ihe kacha echu ochịchị Willie Obiano ụla maka igbatara ọsọ enyemaka aka ọkụ aka ọkụ n'oge mberede na ndị omekoome maọbụ ọnọdụ ọjọọ ndị ọzọ. Kpọọ 070...*

‘Protection of life and property in this state is very important to Willie Obiano administration. For rapid response when you are in danger, call 070...’ **ABS**

- (38) *Anyi no n’oge Ekeresimesi ndi Abia murunụ anya nkọ na ihe gbasara oge nchekwa, ndi ọkụ ugboala hienu asaa n’anya mgbe unu na-agba n’okporo uzọ n’ihi na ndu a adighi abuo.*

‘We are in the Christmas season, Abia people be mindful of your security, transporters be careful on the road because life has no duplicate’ **BCA**

- (39) *Onye bu onye agbataobi gi? kedu ihe ha na-eme ha ji eri nri? Biko nweretu oso na ije koturu ndi oru nchekwa mgbe ije ahụ na-edoghi gi anya n’ogbe gi.*

‘Who are your neighbours, what are they into? Please, do not hesitate to inform the security agencies whenever you notice any strange movements or happenings around your environment’ **Orient FM.**

- (40) *O buru na I nwere ukwara, agakwana njem, o buru na i naghi ekute ume ofuma, nwere ahụ ọkụ mọgbu ukwara, gaa n’ulo ogwu n’oge ka I gwa ha ebe I gachara, nke a bu iji gbochie nje korona igbasasi.*

‘If you have a cough, don’t go on a journey; if you don’t breathe very well, if you have a high temperature, visit the hospital in time and tell them all the places you visited, this will help to prevent the spread of Coronavirus disease.’

Radio Nigeria

As shown above, public announcements are optional discourse units which can be placed at various points during Igbo news broadcasts. Public announcements can occur at the beginning, middle, or end of the radio news. The frequency of public announcements varies across stations. At ABS, public announcements occur twice, both at the beginning and end of the news. In contrast, BCA and Orient FM present public announcements only at the beginning of the news. One advantage of public announcements is that they showcase newscasters’ skills as versatile announcers who can provide additional communication services beyond reading news items during a broadcast. Public announcements often begin with introductory phrases, for example, ‘**Gere ozi a di oke mkpa**’ (Listen to this very important announcement) and ‘**Tupu anyi agaa n’ihu, cheta na...**’ (Before we proceed, remember that...)

4.11. Credit

The practice of acknowledging individuals who contributed to news gathering is referred to as credit. This involves the newsreader recognizing the contributions of all individuals involved in news gathering (Montgomery, 2007). In Igbo radio news, it is customary to acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of individuals involved in news gathering before closing the broadcast. Often, credit, station identification, and self-identification are combined into a complex sentence that concludes the news broadcast. In Igbo news, credit is a mandatory component. Samples are recorded below:

- (41) *N’aha ndi dere ma chikota akuko ndi a i nuru nke R O no n’isi ya.*
‘In the name of all who put this story together, headed by R. O’ **ABS**

- (42) **Dika O. I. na ndi oru nyere ya chikobaya n'asusu bekee si wee hazie ya**
'As put together in English by O. I. and his co-workers' ESBS
- (43) **Na aha onye dere akuko bu N. O. ndi na-ekele unu ekele bu...**
'In the name of the writer of this story, N. K, we ... are saying thank you' BCA
- (44) **E ji m aha N K na ndi nyere ya aka chikoba akuko uwa nke ehie na-ekele gi onyema sonyere anyi.**
'On behalf of N. K. and his crew that put the news together this afternoon, thank you for being part of the news' Radio Nig

Credit is given by acknowledging the name of the head of the team responsible for gathering and translating news from English to Igbo. By acknowledging the name of the department head responsible for news gathering, this also recognizes the contributions of other team members involved in news compilation and translation. The acknowledgement of the translation leader suggests that Igbo radio news is primarily translated from English. Nnaji (2015) has observed this spractice of translation. Ideally, Igbo language radio news, like news in other languages, should be gathered and delivered in the native language (L1). This aligns with Salawu's (2015) model for developmental communication in indigenous African languages, which enables newsreaders to gather and disseminate news to the audience via the same native language channel (L1). A key advantage of this model is that it establishes a connection between the news reader's linguistic practice and that of the listeners. Additionally, this model minimizes discrepancies and gaps between standardization efforts, media practitioners, and language users. It is hoped that Igbo news will eventually reach a point where translation into the language is minimal, as noted by Ndukwe (2012).

4.12. Farewell

Farewell is a linguistic practice where presenters bid goodbye to listeners. In Igbo news, presenters consistently bid farewell to the audience, signaling the end of the broadcast. This practice helps maintain a positive relationship with the audience in Igbo news. Farewell is typically expressed through expressions such as:

- (45) **Ndeewo maka isonyere anyi.** 'Thank you for being with us' Bond FM
- (46) **Ka Chineke gozie gi.** 'May God bless you' ABS
- (47) **Unu emeela nonyere anyi.**
'You have done well by staying with us' BCA
- (48) **Nonyekwara anyi oge ozu, ndeewo**
'Join us next time, thank you' Orient FM
- (49) **M bu S C na-asi ndeewo maka ige nti**
'I, S. C. is saying thank you for listening' EBBC
- (50) **M na-asi gi dalu** 'I am saying thank you' ESBS

Despite its brevity, farewell holds significant importance in Igbo radio news. Farewell typically marks the final discourse unit in Igbo radio news, although some newscasters may occasionally present a commentary after the farewell. If a commentary follows the farewell, an additional farewell, accompanied by a news signature, may be used to definitively signal the end of the news broadcast.

5. The structure of the discourse units in Igbo radio news

The typical structure of Igbo radio news begins with a news signature. Next, the time is announced. The station is then identified by name, frequency, and location. Following station identification, the newscaster greets the audience. The date is then announced, followed by the reading of the news headlines. If applicable, the newscaster then presents a public announcement after reading the news headlines. Next, the newscaster introduces themselves by name. Following the news presentation, the newscaster presents another public announcement, followed by a recap of the news headlines, and acknowledges the contributions of those involved in compiling the news. The newscaster then reintroduces themselves before

presenting the news commentary. An additional commentary may be presented after the farewell. Up to three commentaries may be presented. After completing the commentary, the newscaster bids farewell once more, followed by a final news signature, marking the end of the broadcast.

Often, one discourse unit is embedded in another. The context of Igbo news in each station influences the relationship between discourse units. Notably, the selection and arrangement of discourse units vary by station. For instance, in BCA, the news signature is the initial element in Igbo news. This is followed by the announcement of time, then station identification. Following station identification, the newscaster greets the audience. Next, the date is announced, followed by the reading of the news headlines. The newscaster then presents a public announcement, followed by self-identification. The newscaster inserts station identification and news headlines midway through the news. At the conclusion of the news presentation, the newscaster presents another public announcement, followed by the news headlines, credit acknowledgement, and self-identification. Prior to presenting the news commentary, the newscaster bids farewell. Up to two commentaries may be presented again after the farewell. After completing the commentary, the newscaster bids farewell again, followed by a final news signature, marking the end of the broadcast. Orient FM follows a similar process, with minor variations in the arrangement of elements. On Bond FM, the newscaster begins with a greeting, followed by the time, station identification, and date. Greetings can occur at any point, except before the date. Next, the newscaster presents the news headlines and self-identification. The newscaster then proceeds to present the news immediately after self-identification. The newscaster repeats the headlines, followed by credit acknowledgement. The news concludes with a farewell. On Bond FM, no element is nested within another. While the discourse units used across stations are largely similar, the frequency of their iteration varies. These discourse units collectively create a comprehensive texture for Igbo language news, reflecting the unique characteristics of Igbo people and culture.

6. Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the discourse units in Igbo radio news. This study's analysis revealed various discourse units and their arrangement in Igbo radio news programs, achieving the study's objective. The identified discourse units include news signature, time announcement, station identification, greetings, date, self-identification, headline announcements, full news items, news commentary, public announcements, credit acknowledgments, and farewells. These findings demonstrate the study's successful achievement of its primary objective. Future research may investigate the impact of these discourse units on the audience. This study also encourages scholars to explore discourse units in radio news programs of other African indigenous languages, which may impart unique cultural characteristics.

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