

A Generic Structure Analysis of Selected News Commentaries on Radio Nigeria

Agbeleoba¹, Samuel Oyeyemi¹, Bamisaye¹, Toyin¹

¹*Department of English and Literary Studies, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria*

Corresponding Author: Agbeleoba, Samuel Oyeyemi, E-mail:samuel.agbeleoba@eksu.edu.ng

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an exploration of the Generic Structure Pattern of news commentaries. Previous studies have applied the GSP approach to a number of discourses in the mass media as well as some religious texts in order to establish their generic structures. They include business letters, newspaper editorials magazine editorials and newspaper articles. These previous researches have also focused their attentions only on the print media and religious manuals. However, none has focused on news commentaries. This paper fills this gap in knowledge by exploring news commentaries on Radio Nigeria in order to find out its generic structure as a broadcast text.

Twenty news commentaries were purposively selected, five from each of the following sectors: economy, politics, education, health and sports. The Generic Structure Potential model which is an aspect of the Systemic Functional Theory associated with Halliday and Hasan (1985) was adopted as the framework for the analysis of these news commentaries. The GSP model is premised upon the fact that Contextual Configuration (CC) “permits statements about the text structures” to be made.

This paper is able to identify Anchor’s Introduction (AI), Orientation (O), Spotighting (S) and Resolution or Lesson (RL) as obligatory elements while optional elements are Commentary Lead (CL), Problem/Cause (PC) and Solution/Effect (SE).

The paper submits that the GSP of news commentaries on Radio Nigeria can be viewed as [AI] ^ (CL) ^ [O] ^ [S] ^ [(PC). (SE)] ^ [RL]. ←

Key words: GSP, News Commentaries, Politics, Economy, Health

INTRODUCTION

The media are reliable means of disseminating ideas, information and opinion around the world. They are effective and dependable in providing an important platform for either positive or negative contributions that can bring or hinder development in every facet of life (Adesina & Fagunleka, 2017). The media refer to institutions that are concerned with the gathering, packaging and dissemination of information to the public. Traditionally, there are two broad categories of the media: the electronic and the print media. The print media comprises newspapers and magazines that are printed for mass readership, while the electronic media comprises radio and television and involves the transmission of sound or images through air waves, cable or satellite. In Nigeria, the radio is the key source of information for many people. This is because it is easily accessible both in the cities and villages and most of the programmes are in local languages. Attention is given to news commentaries on Radio Nigeria, the only Federal Government-owned Radio station in Nigeria with a daily coverage of over forty million people (Ab-

dulkadir, 2000:35). Although it is of the spoken medium, the commentary is first crafted in the written mode before broadcast. A radio news commentary expresses an opinion. It allows the broadcast media or individuals and professionals to analyse and comment on topical issues in the news. News commentary is expected to be relevant to the listener and his or her immediate environment. It must reflect opinions on an issue in the news.

Genre has been categorized under the domain of register in a context of situation (Santosa, 2009). Genres are classified or identified according to the professional or peculiar use of language. There are business genre, medical genre, scientific genre, media genre and so on. The news profession has always identified two clear genres, each with its own subject matter and rules of composition; as a result, news is usually demarcated into two categories: “hard news” and “soft news or features”. A typical newsroom can thus be described as a world of “hard news” and “soft news/feature stories” (Bula, 1996). These two major genres assign significantly different writing styles and story structures to

different topics. What drives the two forms is the nature of the subject being focused on. The hard news focuses on the discrete events, statements, decisions, actions and disasters. The soft news, also known as features, spotlight or commentary, places emphasis on the other dimensions of life, such as explanation, history, thought, feeling, mood and process (Bula, 1996). Radio Nigeria network employs the two major writing genres to present information to the listeners. The hard news and the news commentary

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Previous studies have applied the GSP approach to a number of discourses in the mass media as well as some religious texts in order to establish their generic structures. They include business letters (Ghadessy, 1993), newspaper editorials (Ansary and Babaii, 2004), magazine editorials (Odebunmi, 2007), and newspaper articles (Adesina and Fagunleka, 2017). These previous researches have focused the print media. This paper, therefore, is specifically on selected news commentaries on Radio Nigeria in order to find out its generic structure and the way rhetorical strategies are employed in these particular texts.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to:

- i. identify the obligatory and optional elements of news commentary texts; and
- ii. establish the generic structure pattern of news commentaries on Radio Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the objectives of the study above, the following questions which the study intends to answer are raised:

- i. What are the obligatory and optional elements of news commentary texts?
- ii. What is the generic structure pattern of news commentaries on Radio Nigeria?

METHODOLOGY

The larger part of the data for this study was sourced from *Pendants of Rhythm: A Selection of Radio Nigeria Network News Commentaries, Volume 1*, which covers commentaries written between 1991 and 2009 while others were sourced from Radio Nigeria network news bulletins. Our data consists of twenty (20) news commentary texts. These news commentaries were purposively selected covering five (5) notable sectors of the Nigeria national life. These Five (5) sectors are economy, politics, education, health and security. They were closely examined to determine their GSP. Four (4) samples in each of these sectors were selected in order to have a corpus of texts on various topics.

FRAMEWORK

This study adopts the Generic Structure Potential (GSP) model which is an aspect of the Systemic Functional Theory

associated with Halliday and Hasan (1985). Part of the focus of SFL is the identification of recurring patterns that are used in the organization of the content of a specific genre and the relationship between these patterns and specific linguistic features. The GSP model is premised upon the fact that Contextual Configuration (CC) “permits statements about the text structures” to be made (Halliday and Hasan 1985: 56). According to Halliday and Hasan, the following about a text structure are predictable: obligatory elements, optional elements, sequencing of elements and recursiveness. It is possible to express the total range of optional and obligatory elements and their order in such a way that we exhaust the possibility of text structure for every text that can be appropriate to a particular CC. This possibility is what is known as the structure potential of the text-type or its generic structure potential (GSP). Halliday and Hasan (1985) use the information below:

When you go to buy something in a convenience store you can be reasonably certain of what’s going to happen in that situation. First, you’ll walk in and you might say ‘hello’. Then you’ll ask for some batteries and then pay. We can guess this sequence due to our previous experience with these kinds of situations and the fact that they are nearly always the same. Some parts may change (you might not say hello) but you always have to pay.

to identify the obligatory and optional rhetorical elements of shop interaction or service encounter. This is represented as:

$$[(G) \bullet (SI)^{\wedge}] [(SE \bullet) \{SR^{\wedge} SC^{\wedge}\}^{\wedge} S^{\wedge}] P^{\wedge} PC^{\wedge} (F)$$

where:

G = Greeting
 SI = Sale Initiation
 SE = Sale Enquiry
 SR = Sale Request
 SC = Sale Compliance
 S = Sale
 P = Purchase
 PC = Purchase Closure
 F = Finis

() = optional element
 • = more than one option in sequence
 [] = restraint in order
 ← = iteration
 { } = iteration of elements is equal

(Halliday and Hasan, 1989:63-65).

The catalogue above can be read thus: any shop transaction in English should contain the following structural elements:

Greeting (G), Sale Initiation (SI), Sale Enquiry (SE), Sale Request (SR), Sale Compliance (SC), Sale (S), Purchase (P), Purchase Closure (PC), and Finis (F). The round brackets () in the above GSP indicate optionality of the enclosed elements. Therefore, G, SI, SE, and F are optional, while SR, SC, S, P and PC are obligatory. The dot between elements means “more than one option” in sequence. The square bracket [] shows restraints on sequence. The braces with a curved arrow () indicate that the degree of iteration for elements in the square brackets is equal. That is to say, if SR occurs twice, then SC must also occur twice. Lastly, the caret sign (^) indicates sequence (Ansary and Babaii, 2004:7). Essentially, Halliday and Hasan (1989) posit that

any shop transaction comprises a series of optional and obligatory structural elements sequenced in a specific order. The obligatory elements define the genre to which a text belongs. Without these elements, the text will not be interpreted as belonging to that particular genre. An optional element is one which can occur but is not under obligation to occur. It is possible to state the generic structure of any genre.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Obligatory and Optional Elements in the News Commentaries

The three elements that make up the context of culture (field, tenor and mode) help in determining the structure of a particular text or genre. The following elements were identified in the samples of news commentaries that were analysed:

Anchor’s Introduction (AI)

This is the voice of the newscaster introducing the topic, writer and reader of the news commentary.

Commentary Lead (CL)

This element may come immediately after the anchor’s introduction. It is intended to capture the listener’s attention. It is like a topic sentence that summarises the content of the article in a concise fashion. It shows the focus of the writer on the issue being discussed. It might be written in a sentence or in a number of sentences.

Orientation (O)

This element includes the antecedents of the topic of discussion as well as definition and clarification of concepts in the text (obligatory).

Spotlighting (S)

This is the element that allows the writer to stress or buttress a salient point that serves as the main idea of the text. It is the nucleus of the news commentary text. The writer of a news commentary spotlights some empirical evidences of issues being raised in the text. Being a broadcast media (radio) text, adequate description (statistics) of issue or concept is required in order to convey meaning over a short period of time (obligatory).

Problem/Cause (PC)

The writer may wish to identify specific problem or cause (as the case may be) of the particular issue in the text (optional).

Solution/Effect (SE)

This element is utilised by the writer who had already identified a problem or cause of a particular issue may wish to proffer solution or highlight the effect of such issue (optional).

Resolution/Lesson (RL)

This element always comes at the end of the article. It usually suggests a lesson that can be learnt from the issue being discussed and brings the text to a conclusion (obligatory).

Examples of these elements are indicated in the samples below:

Excerpt-1	<p>ANCHOR: The role of co-operative societies in rural development is the issue examined in today’s focus scripted by a Guest Writer, Dan Eboh. It is read from our FRCN ENUGU studios.</p> <p>From the pre-colonial days to modern times, cooperation had been a fundamental phenomenon for development among communities in Nigeria, particularly in the South East geo political zone. There were such societies as farmers, hunters, financial contribution of Isusu groups among others. This was later modified by the introduction of British type of cooperative association in Nigeria by Rockdale in 1935. However, cooperative associations or unions assumed a new dimension during the regime of the premier of the defunct Eastern Nigeria, Late Dr. Michael Okpara. This era witnessed the emergence of palm produce cooperative and marketing societies, agricultural extension services and some farm settlements which were established in centres to boost food production. During this period, new methods of improved scientific and mechanized agriculture gradually replaced some of the orthodox methods. Livestock farming and the introduction of fast breeding species were introduced.</p> <p>Similarly, with the introduction of cooperative societies, it was possible to utilize large expanse of cultivable lands for extensive farming activities. Roads were constructed to these farm sites which contributed to the economic and environmental development of these areas. Now that the federal government is taking new steps to facilitate development of rural centres, it is important that efforts should be made to integrate these already consolidated grounds in cooperative unionism as part of strategies for development. In this regard, it is therefore necessary for the various tiers of government in the South East to evolve a strong and workable idea of enforcing cooperative movement in rural communities, through effective mobilization of their developmental resources. A successful development of the rural centres can be more effectively achieved by the government encouraging communal development efforts through empowerment of groups, communities, schools, Churches, Clubs with substantial financial support and expertise to form cooperative societies. More importantly, it is necessary for adequate public enlightenment to be introduced by the media and other agencies on the role of cooperative societies in development. This is because it will generate improved living standards in these areas which will translate to the emergence of other good things of life among rural dwellers.</p> <p>THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT; MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2008</p>	<p>AI</p> <p>O</p> <p>S</p> <p>RL</p>
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- Excerpt 2 **ANCHOR:** HUDU SHEHU CURRENT AFFAIRS UNIT, F.R.C.N KADUNA writes on the relevance of an important day in Nigeria's political history. AI
- It was that famous American President Abraham Lincoln who defined democracy ' as the government of the People by the People and for the People. Although there were different definitions of the term by various political scientists, however what makes Abraham Lincoln definition more apt is the choice of people as its central theme. Unlike other systems of government such as Monarchy, Totalitarianism, Diarchy and Fascism which solely derive their powers by virtue of birth as in the case of Monarchy or by the use of force as being witnessed in the military rule, power under a democratic system of government resides solely in the-hands of the people who have the absolute power to decide on how they want to be governed and by whom. CL
- It is these sets of ideals as guaranteed under a democratic system of government that tends to give it a global appeal. It is for these reasons also that countries after countries have now come to embrace democracy as the best system of government. Despite its chequered political history as occasioned by military coups and counter coups Nigeria over the years has managed to establish its presence among the country of nations that practice democracy. Although it is now exactly nine years since the nation's return to democratic rule but the questions many people ask are how far Nigeria fared under the current -democratic dispensation? Are the democratic institutions which engender free participation in any electoral contest viable enough? Does the electoral process allow for the emergence of true representatives of the people? Have those truly elected representative of the people lived up to their electoral promises? These are some of the fundamental questions that need to be critically analyzed before any conclusion can be drawn as to whether or not Nigeria has fared any better under the current democratic dispensation. O
- It is an incontrovertible fact that one of the most important institutions that guarantees the sustainability of a democratic system of government is the electoral body which is charged with the responsibility of organizing and conducting a free and fair election. The Independent National Commission INEC which as it were is Nigeria's highest electoral body has on several occasions been found wanting over the shoddy manner which some elections were conducted in the country. This could easily be attested to by the number of elections being canceled at the election petition tribunal. PC
- Although not all the elections canceled at the tribunals were INEC's fault but in most cases the conduct of the electoral body leaves a lot to be desired: This explains why some people have been suggesting that for there to be any credible election in the country there is the need to insulate the electoral body from an undue interference by the politicians. It is therefore suggested that for NEC to be truly independent there is the need to revisit the law which gives the executive the power to appoint the Chairman of the commission. It is being recommended that the advisory committee made up of people with impeccable track record such as the retired Chief Justices of the federation and other eminent Nigerians with an unblemished record of service be set up who will be responsible for the nomination of at least three credible persons for the position of the Chairman of INEC and passed on to the President for his approval. SE
- DEMOCRACY DAY REMEMBRANCE; NEWS COMMENTARY OF MAY 19, 2014**
- Excerpt 3 **ANCHOR:** The Federal Government has put in place measures aimed at using tourism to stimulate the economy. In the news commentary, RASAKI ADELAJA of our current affairs unit looks at the role of tourism in a nation's economy and suggests the way forward for Country. AI
- Tourism is one of the vital investments for the development of a nation's economy. Nigeria too has a lot to derive from tourism if all centres of attraction and recreation are well-developed. For instance, tourism holds great potent to enhance foreign exchange-earnings of this country and thereby increasing Nigeria's foreign reserves. This is important, now that the nation is faced with economic downturn as a result of dwindling fortune. Investment analysts are of the view that the business of tourism is the best revenue earner in the world, due to rapid transformation in there for transportation and communication. Unfortunately, Tourism as revenue earner has been neglected for too long before realizing that the economic benefits are multifarious. Thus, Mexico an oil-producing country like Niger is earning more foreign exchange from tourism, this being an indication the much-needed foreign exchange from tourism may be higher than derivable from oil. CL
- Given the benefits that can be tapped from tourism, it is a serious work, deserving of government priority attention. Similarly, various tourist sites abound across the nation, fully developed, will enhance the country's greatness and fame include the Yankari National Park, Argungu Fishing Festival, Ikogosi Warm Spring, the Beautiful Scene of Manbilla Plateau, and the Hilly Gardens of Idanre, Terracotta of Jos and Olumo Rock in Abeokuta. O
- Beside the historic town-of Badagry, which was an important Slave Port in the Sixteenth and .Seventeenth centuries and later the landing site of white missionaries; the first story building in the country, aril the site of the tree, under which Christianity was first entrenched in Nigeria. In the recent years, the federal governments had taken measures to boost tourism. Hence, the government through decree of 1992, established the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NITDC) chargedwith, among others; to identify tourism attractions and facilities in the country as well as promote and market same. S
- Another step forwards' boosting tourism was through the registration of the federation of tourism association of Nigeria and the registration, last year of hospitality and tourism enterprises by the NITDC to standardize facilities and services -in the industry for sustainable tourism market. The creation of a separate-ministry of tourism and culture at the inception of the present administration was another step in the concerted effort to develop the tourism industry, And in November last year, Vice President Atiku Abubakar, in a message to a business forum in London, urged potential foreign investors to invest in tourism in Nigeria, stressing that the industry was one of the priorities of this administration.

- Above all, the tourism and culture ministry has concluded plans to conduct the first national workshop, aimed at using tourism to stimulate the economy. The workshop is scheduled to take place between next month and July in each of the six geopolitical zones of the country. In order to restore tourism as a prime mover of the economy, the federal government must ensure a large and growing private sector participation in the investment and business of tourism. There is need for the ministry in charge to adopt an integrated approach to tourism development in the country and to ensure that its services are made more reliable and goal-oriented. A national development master Plan, which will involve the tourism sector in overall development, should be evolved while there is the urgent need to formulate a strong tourism policy that will accommodate all the practitioners. It is also necessary for government to provide an enabling environment to promote tourism and take it revenue-yielding venture like some developed countries. Nigeria should take advantage of the 2003 all-Africa games to kick-start tourism, as the event is believed to provide immense opportunities for the country to showcase its tourism assets to the world as well as its business and economic potentials to foreign investors'
- STIMULATING ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH TOURISM; THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2002.**
- Excerpt 4 **ANCHOR:** Abubakar Sadiq Bapetel of Current Affairs Unit, FRCN Kaduna writes on the delay in the passage of this year's budget by the National Assembly. RL
- It was in November last year that the President, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua presented the 2008 budget to the National Assembly and the two legislative chambers promised to ensure smooth passage of the budget to enable governments' developmental projects and services continue for the benefit of the entire citizenry. Surprisingly, what followed was contrary to the assurance of easy passage of the budget by the National Assembly. Five months after the budget presentation it was yet to be signed into law. CL
- When it received the budget document, the national assembly had noted that it was not accompanied by the revenue profile, which was to serve as a guide to the house and to ensure sectoral allocation where appropriately approximated. The revenue profile was also to provide the benchmark of the Crude Oil price to which the budget was built. For this fiscal year, government expected revenue of four point five trillion naira, of which ever three point five trillion naira, was to be derived from Crude oil sales and which represents eighty percent of the projected total revenue. The non-oil revenue on the other hand was estimated at ninety one zillion naira which represents the remaining twenty percent. O
- According to the president, the 2008 budget was designed to accelerate the provision of basic infrastructures and improve the living standards of Nigerians. It was also to create job opportunities as well as provide enabling environment for the private sector to thrive. Key sectors like power, transportation, and food security were given prominence in the budget. The disagreement between the Executive and the National Assembly in passive the budget could be traced to the upward adjustment of oil benchmark of fifty three dollars per barrel by the executives to fifty nine dollars per barrel by the national assembly. The national Assembly did not stop at that, it also increased money appropriated to some key sectors of the economy including the House. S
- Nigerians were now left with contending views as to who was responsible for the delay, while some people rested the blame on the executive, others think it was purely that of the National Assembly whoever was responsible should bear in mind that the masses who suffer most from the delay were watching. It was apparent that by the time the 2008 budget was finally signed into law, many projects would have suffered some setback. It was therefore necessary that whatever disagreement was between the two arms of government, was resolved without further delay and efforts to ensure the delay did not affect the implementation of development programme. To stop a repeat of such ugly situation, Government's Ministries, and extra ministerial department should henceforth be compelled to submit their budget projection early enough to allow the executive put its figures in order for Onward presentation to the National Assembly in good time. Nigerians were waiting anxiously for the assent and immediate implementation of the budget which should be seen as an overriding interest of Nigerians. Both the Executive and the national assembly should ensure that Nigerian's did not witness a repeat of such incidence. PC
- BUDGET DELAY; MARCH 6, 2008**
- Excerpt 5 **ANCHOR:** The theme for this year's World health Day is "SAFE BLOOD". In the News Commentary, OLUSEGUN AYANKOSO of our Current Affairs Unit underscores the need for effective preventive mechanism to check blood-transmitted diseases. AI
- Blood is life, so goes a popular saying, but only good and safe blood can support or give life. Blood is made up principally of tree constituents. These are the red and white corpuscles and platelets. While the red corpuscles give the red colour to the blood and help in transmitting oxygen to all parts of the body, the white corpuscles which are fewer in number help to defend the blood against diseases. CL
- The platelets, on the other hand are responsible for the clotting of the blood in times of wounds. Blood-related diseases therefore can be transmitted through blood transfusion or insect bites. This fact thus brings to light, the essence of ensuring that people not only have blood in sufficient quantity in their body but the right type of quality which is disease-free. Fatality arising from blood disorder or blood related diseases is quite high O

For instance, malaria and yellow fever which are some of the highest killers-diseases in the world are transmitted into the blood through mosquito bites and such killer diseases as the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Similarly, Hepatitis 'B' a serious killer diseases said to be affecting about twenty million Nigerians is contracted through infested blood. Blood transfusion has been found to be very useful in treating accident victims and in reducing the effects of sickle cell anemia cases. Surprisingly however, there have been reported cases of people contracting many diseases from blood even from the hospitals. This is probably why the United Nations had chosen the need for safe blood as the theme for this year's world Health Day.

The revelation is contained in a recent UN Report that about one hundred' and twenty countries in the World do not have adequate facilities for the screening and storage of blood. This development no doubt has exposed people to grater dangers, especially in developing countries like Nigeria where there are numerous private substandard hospitals and quack doctors engaging in blood-related operations. Apart from intensifying efforts to educate the public, especially through the media on the various avenues of contracting blood-related diseases such as harmful cultural practices like incision and circumcision, there is also the need to properly equip our hospital and blood banks.

While government owned hospitals should be provided with modern equipment to reduce if not eliminated the risk to which patients and medical personnel are exposed due to contact with blood, private hospitals should be subjected to regular inspection. This is to ensure that blood transmitted is not only got from hygienic sources but is also safely transmitted. Special Task forces could be put in place to achieve this objective. These task forces should visit Health centres regularly to inspect the quality of blood in their blood bank and the medical fitness of blood donors and blood merchant. Traditional medical practitioners should also be placed under regular surveillance to ensure that they do not put people under regular surveillance to ensure that they do not put people's lives at risk through blood-related practices.

The threat being caused by Aids, Haepatitis 'B' sickle Cell Anaemia made worse by the activities of quack in both the orthodox and traditional medical field should now, more than ever before aroused the attention of government to the need to put in place, measures aimed at ensuring safe blood transfusion.

PREVENTING BLOOD TRANSMITTED DISEASES; MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2000

Excerpt 6

ANCHOR: The Imo State House of Assembly is to set up a committee to monitor the execution of projects by local government Councils in the state. In today's commentary, EMMA OKERE of our Current Affairs Unit, FRCN ENUGU writes on the need to "Ensure prudent management of resources by Local Government Councils."

Essentially, the 1976 Local Government Reforms which recognized local government councils as the Third Tier of government was to bring governance and development closer to the people in the rural areas. Laudable as this recognition was then, the big question has remained whether the objectives has been realized. It is no longer news that local government councils in the country have often come under scathing criticisms for their inability to render effective service to the people. Perceived or real as these criticisms may be the fact remains that all has not been well with the Third Tier of government especially in transforming the rural areas for which it was created in the first instance. It is on record that the entire crisis that had been a recurring feature in the administration of local government councils in the past eight years in the South-East and South-South geo-political zone was a fall-out of disagreements between Councillors and Chairmen in the disbursement of allocations.

Partially true is the fact that sponsored suspensions and counter-suspensions of .principal-officers of both the executive and legislative arms of local governments were financially motivated. While officials of local governments could be said to share greater blame for the non-performance of local government councils, state 'governments and political mentors also have their share of this ineptitude. How does one explain situations where state governments make frivolous deductions of local government allocations, while political mentors readily wait in the places of the Chairmen at the end of each month for a piece of the action.

This is a plethora of spurious contracts, abandoned projects and decayed social infrastructure in the rural areas. This no doubt may have motivated the move by the Imo State House of Assembly to set up a committee to monitor the execution of projects by local government councils in the state. The plan is coming on the heels of warnings by governors and Houses of Assembly particularly in the, South-East and South-South states that local government councils engaged in the award of frivolous contracts or mismanagement of local government resources would be sanctioned. It is therefore imperative that other state Houses of Assembly should emulate the Imo state example by setting up similar committees -to reinforce their oversight function. It may be necessary for routine inspection of projects being executed by local government authorities to determine the quality of work and contract sum. Transformation of rural areas by Local Government .Councils through the provision of basic infrastructure will definitely stem Tara' urban migration. This would enhance the standard of living of the people with its attendant economic empowerment. The overall development of the nation starts from the rural areas and no effort should be spared to achieve this.

PRUDENT MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

Excerpt 7

ANCHOR: There have been reports of increasing cause of child trafficking across African continent in recent times. In the News Commentary, Ken ADELAJA of our Current Affairs Unit examines the factors responsible for the menace and stresses as well as the need to stem the practice.

It is disheartening to note that children who are invaluable heritage of God, have now become mere commodities of trade being offered for sale in various parts of Africa in a version similar to the old obnoxious slave-trade. For example, there have been cases of parents along the West African coast including Nigeria up to Central Africa who were offered money as from 35 US Dollars in addition monthly remuneration in exchange for their children. This seems to be the most typical form of child trafficking in West and Central Africa in recent times. A current statistics shows that an estimated ten to fifteen Malian children working on plantations in Cote d'Ivoire. Majority of these children are victims of trafficking. According to reports in Nigeria in 1996 some 4000 children were involved in the illegal human trafficking from Cross River state to various locations within and outside the country. Besides, there are reported cases of some women intermediaries to recruit young girls between seven to fifteen years and then contract them as domestic help or prostitutes. Worse still the Nigerian Minister of Women Affairs and Youth Development, early this month expressed concern about this increasing cases of trafficking in women and children at that children daily being transported within and outside the country borders and sold as slave labour.

A latest report by the UNICEF shows that millions of children across-the world. being dragged into it for the multi-billion dollar sex trade every year and that the United Nations is therefore calling for a policy that will check the tier, Traumatized by despicable working conditions ill-treatment and disease, children who fall victim of human trafficking and child labour eventually lessen their dignity and develop a feeling of being outcasts. This can surely lead to psychological and social disorders, maladjustment and tendency to criminal behaviour. Reports have it that one out of five children who fall victim to child trafficking is bedeviled with illness or mishaps. Child trafficking is facilitated by a number of factors; prominent among which is widespread poverty.

According to study, countries suffering from low education levels and high fertility rates tend to be more vulnerable to the offer of those who engage in child trafficking. However, there is currently a sub-regional plan of action towards the practice. This includes measures for awareness-raising, legal and institutional framework as well as bilateral cooperation for repatriation and extradition of traffickers. The countries involved include Nigeria, Togo, Benin Republic, Ghana and five others.

Fortunately too, the present administration in Nigeria is working on a law that will prescribe stiff penalties for child abuse and trafficking. The law is aimed at protecting the fundamental rights of children.

The international Labour Organization (ILO) has taken steps against all forms of forced labour such as the unanimous adoption of the worst forms of child labour convention, 1999 9 (NO 182) by countries participating in the sub-regional programme to combat child trafficking. And NGOs are said to be active in awareness-raising through public debate and regional re-integration of these measures would go along way in eliminating child trafficking, governments and the relevant agencies as well as international organizations should evolve stricter sanctions against employers of thud labour including parents involved in this dastardly act.

COMBATING CHILD TRAFFICKING; FRIDAY DECEMBER 14, 2017

Excerpt 8

ANCHOR: The need for an end to all forms of dehumanizing treatment meted out to widows in the society particularly in the South-East is the issue discussed in today's Focus, written by OBI MBANEFO-OLUOHA of our Current Affairs Unit F. R. C. N. ENUGU CREST. The Script is read from our Enugu studios.

It is pertinent to emphasize that any form of practice, action or inaction of human beings whose negative impact outweighs positive influence on the society does not make for human existence. Various societies or communities particularly in the South-East have their peculiar cultural or traditional practices that have existed for long. While some of these cultural or traditional practices strive to uphold and promote the age-long tradition of the people, others are just barbaric, harmful and dehumanizing.

Several of these dehumanizing practices tend to be gender discriminatory, treatment of a widow after the husband's death is a nightmare when seen, happens to a man who loses his female partner. Recent reports of this callous treatment on widows in some parts of the communities in the south-Eastern states have been upsetting and have continued to agitate the minds of concerned individuals and organizations. In some areas of Imo, Abia, Ebonyi, Anambra and Enugu States, widows are subjected to inhuman treatment such as drinking the water used to bath the husband's corpses throughout the night while some are compelled to marry the late husband's brothers. Majority of widows completely lose their rights to their late husband's property. There are also instances in these States where widows are stripped of all their inheritance including children. These practices are reminiscent of the Dark Age and create serious social upheaval, induce health problems and expose the widow to man-made and other avoidable hardships. At the end of it all, the widows are left wretched, abandoned, humiliated and dehumanized.

Happily, many people including non-governmental organizations and Christian groups have taken a bold step by condemning the various ill treatments meted 10 widows in the society. Indeed, series of appeal already made to traditional rulers and religious leaders are made to ensure that most of these negative practices are looked into and the obnoxious ones are abolished. It is most disturbing that some women organizations particularly called Umilada are more often than not, the first to vilify their less fortunate colleagues`. They cast aspersions as if they have the key to life. The unanswered question is why a widow must be compelled to drink any concoction to prove beyond doubt that she has no hand in the death of her husband. It is quite unfortunate that relations of the deceased who never assisted or helped the deceased during his life are the first to demand for his property and other assets without considering the fact that the widow has children to care for. Widows deserve sympathy and their plight should be given the sympathy it deserves. Both government and non-governmental organizations should give this issue the desired attention and also initiate ways to improve the lot of widows to enable them enjoy equal rights as stated in Article One of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulates that "All Human beings are equal in dignity and rights". There is also need more than ever to ensure the empowerment of women economically to enable them stand on their own and be able to cater for their children on the death of their husbands. The need for the emancipation of women from harmful widowhood practices should be collective effort. All well-meaning Nigerians should embrace this noble crusade.

DEHUMANIZING TREATMENT METED OUT ON WIDOWS IN THE SOCIETY WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2007.

SE

S

PC

RL

Excerpt 9 **ANCHOR:** Researchers and policy makers from some African countries have just held a meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe to find ways of reducing the rate of maternal deaths on the continent. The problems associated with high maternal deaths and measures to reduce it are the issues examined in this News Commentary by AYODELE ALIYU of our Current Affairs Unit.

AI

Available statistics has shown that more than six hundred thousand women die annually, all over the world as a result of complications during child birth. Out of this figure, over ninety percent of the victims of maternal deaths is recorded in Africa. The primary implication of this is that African nations lose more mothers to pregnancy related problems than any other countries across the globe.

O

For instance, in Africa, one out of 16 women die due to maternal complication compared to one out of 65 women in Asian countries. In the Americas, one out of about four thousand women dies from child bearing problems. The question that readily comes to mind is: what is responsible for high maternal deaths in Africa, compared to other parts of the world?

S

PC

One noticeable factor for this rather unfortunate situation is that it is a reflection of poor health facilities on the continent. Many African nations lack the required basic health infrastructure, institutions and medical personnel that can competently and adequately take care of the health of their citizens. For instance, a medical centre in Asia or America will take care of far fewer numbers of patients than it is the case in Africa. As such a public hospital in Nigeria, Ghana or Zimbabwe which was originally designed to handle about 500 out-patients, today has been forced to take care of over 5000. In terms of personnel, an average medical doctor in Angola, Burundi, Mali, Nigeria or Senegal is being over-worked from morning till night without a moment of rest. Provision of medical facilities is even poorer. Equipment such as those for X-ray, scanning of blood test should be available in hospitals. Besides, hospital environment are not patient-friendly, such that many patients do not enjoy the sight of hospital and personnel working within them. This should not be so. In such a situation, patients including pregnant women would rather run away from hospitals instead of seeking help from them

SE

RL

REDUCING MATERNAL DEATHS IN AFRICA; THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2001

Excerpt 10 **ANCHOR:** This commentary was written by ADE SINA IDRIS of the CURRENT AFFAIRS. UNIT LAGOS NATIONAL STATION.

AI

Ordinarily, mental health can be said to be an important aspect of entire health mechanism of a person. Through a person realizes his or her own cognitive abilities or defects in relationship with other members of his society. With a balanced mental disposition, one is more equipped in coping with the stress of life as well as sound reasoning. Productivity and positive contributions to the community is further enhanced to the extent that one appreciates rules and also expects mistakes easily.

CL

On the other hand, mental disorder is a condition of incomplete or halted development of the mind. It is sharply in contrast with mental health. This is because such a disorder diminishes or impedes the possibility of self-development. It also constitutes a fundamental stumbling block for human progress. A person suffering from this ailment is likely to see things differently. Its perception of facts is always at variance with the norms of the society. And as the victim becomes isolated and abandoned by the members of that immediate society. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) brain or health disorders come in different forms. They include mental retardation, alcohol dependence, epilepsy, depressive disorders, Alzheimer's disease among others.

O

One thing about these diseases is that they are all different forms of mental illness brain disorders. They provoke sufferings; cause disability and can even shorten life span. Health experts say mental illness or brain disorders are caused by varying degree of biological, psychological and social factors. According to them, one biological cause of this disorder is the lack of iodine, which they claim vital for brain development in the diet of a growing child. Under the social and psychological influences the experts explained that individuals react differently to stressful situations. To them loss of work and a loved one can potentially lead to depression which could in turn cause brain impairment. Poor nurturing environment, broken families, violence in the home or community have also, been identified as sources of mental illness. Others are extreme poverty, war and displacement.

S

In some places of the world, especially the developing countries of Africa, mental illnesses are often times said to be caused by evil spirit or voodoo. This is a difficult issue because it pits faith against fact and cultural beliefs against scientific knowledge. But whatever the causes are, brain or mental disorders are a complex and severe problem that deserve collective assistance of every segment of the society.

In what has been described as a landmark study, conducted in 27 developing and developed countries, it was discovered that mental health disorders are diseases that know no boundaries. For instance, the study found out that some 17 million young persons in the 5 to 17 age group in Latin America and the Caribbean are affected by mental or brain disorders, severe enough to require urgent treatment. 10 percent of school children in Alexandria and Egypt also suffer from one form of the disease. The report also indicate that Pakistan, 44 percent of the adults were affected by depressive disorders, while about 35,000 people die every year in Russia from alcohol induced disorders. There is also the shocking news that epilepsy, a brain disease characterized by repeated seizures has been found to be universal but more frequent in developing countries.

Today, the picture in the world is far from perfect because more countries are plunging into economic crisis, avoidable internal conflict and inter-state wars. The result is that most people are forced to grapple with extreme poverty. Some have been displaced as a result of war have no better option than to either take to alcohol or drugs which are proven sources of mental disorders. The solutions to mental health problems are not difficult to find. Treatments are both of a biological nature, that is good medication as well as psychological which has to do with psycho education. The last but most important is effective rehabilitation of the patient. Facts have shown that persons suffering from any of the mental illnesses can be completely trusted and still contribute to societal development. This is the more reason why patients of mental illness should not be disseminated from the society. For a person who has been discharged from psychiatric home such exclusion or abandonment may lead him back to the hospital. What mental health patients require is care and not exclusion.

RL

MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS; APRIL 12, 2016.

Excerpt 11 **ANCHOR:** DANLADI BUBA GOMBE of the CURRENT AFFAIRS UNIT, F.R.C.N KADUNA writes on the need to fix the perennial problems of an important part of the transport sector.

AI

The Rehabilitation of the Nigerian Railways is one program that has been the concern of past administration and indeed the Umaru Musa Yar'adua-led government of today. The contract for the construction of nearly three thousand kilometers of rail track nationwide given to a foreign company by the pat Obasanjo government in 2006 would if blended with the genuine commitment of the Yar'adua administration go a long way in the development of the country.

O

The question we need to address is the position of the contract and the status of the estimated 520 billion naira required to rehabilitate the system. The program of rehabilitating the country's railway system is actually a compelling issue for the country. There is hardly any doubt that the resuscitation of the rail transportation would transform the Nigerian economy. Resuscitating the nation's will offer employment opportunities, improve the process of conveying perishable raw materials from the rural areas to urban centres. It is a well-known fact that in the developed countries, the rail system is so central to their social and commercial activities. Indeed, it will be marvelous to have a rail system that can give workers in cities like Abuja, Kano, Lagos, Ibadan, Enugu and Port Harcourt opportunities to live in nearby towns, thereby commuting on daily basis. However, all these can only be realized if the government involves the private sector to also play a role in the process of developing the railways. The revival of the railways must not be at the expense of the retired workers of the defunct Nigerian Railways. The government must ensure that Pensioners of the Nigerian Railway are adequately compensated and a good number of them re-absorbed under a contractual basis. It is an understatement to say Nigeria is in dire need of a modern and efficient rail transport system to develop its economy.

S

RL

RESUSCITATING THE NIGERIAN RAILWAYS; MAY 16, 2008

The Distribution of Elements in the Texts

S/N	TOPIC	Anchor's Introduction	Commentary Lead	Orientation	Spotlighting	Problem/Cause	Solution/Effect	Resolution/Lessons
1	BUDGET DELAY	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2	RESUSCITATING THE NIGERIAN RAILWAYS	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
3	THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT	+	-	+	+	-	-	+
4	THE NEED TO PRIVATIZE THE ENERGY SECTOR	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
5	DEMOCRACY DAY REMEMBRANCE	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
6	PRUDENT MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS	+	-	+	+	-	-	+
7	REPOSITIONING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SYSTEM	+	-	+	+	-	-	+
8	NATIONAL ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY (NEEDS)	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
9	PREVENTING BLOOD TRANSMITTED DISEASES	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
10	REDUCING MATERNAL DEATHS IN AFRICA	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
11	MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS	+	-	+	+	-	-	+
12	INTEGRATING ROLL-BACK-MALARIA AND HIVAIDS PROGRAMMES INTO NIGERIA'S PRIMARY HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
13	STRIKE AND EDUCATION IN NIGERIA	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
14	FALLEN STANDARD OF EDUCATION, RESTRUCTURING OF THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR AND THE RESURGENCE OF STUDENT UNREST IN UNIVERSITIES	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
15	THE PROLIFERATION OF PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE COUNTRY	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
16	NEED FOR INDUSTRIAL PEACE IN THE UNIVERSITIES	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
17	DEHUMANIZING TREATMENT METED OUT ON WIDOWS IN THE SOCIETY	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
18	A CHANGE IN THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE	+	-	+	+	-	-	+
19	COMBATING CHILD TRAFFICKING	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
20	AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION AND RESOLUTION ON TERRORISM	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
	PERCENTAGE	100%	60%	100	100%	45%	45%	100%

The foregoing analysis can be summarized as follows:

Anchor's Introduction (AI)

This is an obligatory element. It occurs in all the news commentary texts.

Commentary Lead (CL)

This is an optional element. Whenever it occurs, it comes immediately after the anchor's introduction. It is intended to capture the listener's attention. In the absence of commentary lead, the orientation takes precedence immediately after the anchor's introduction. It shows the focus of the writer on the issue being discussed. Commentary lead occurs in 60% of the text considered in this research.

Orientation (O)

This is an obligatory element which occurs in all the news commentary texts.

Spotlighting (S)

This is also an obligatory element. It appears in all the texts considered.

Problem/Cause (PC)

This element is optional. It occurs in 45% of the texts considered in this study.

This element is also optional. It follows the problem/solution element and they occur concurrently. It is also evident in 45% of the texts considered in this study.

Resolution/Lesson (RL)

This element is two-in-one but the two internal elements are mutually exclusive. In a text where there is a resolution or recommendation, there will not be any segment to indicate lessons to be learnt and vice versa. It is an obligatory element.

Sequence of Obligatory and Optional Elements

There are four (4) obligatory elements in the analysed texts. They are: the Anchor's Introduction (AI), Orientation (O), Spotlighting (S) and Resolution of Lesson (RL). Also, three (3) optional elements were identified in the news commentary texts: Commentary Lead (CL), Problem or Cause (PC) and Solution or Effect (SE).

Obligatory Elements: [AI] ^ [O] ^ [S] ^ [RL]

The caret (^) shows the sequence of the elements, while the square brackets [] indicate restraint on sequence. These elements occur in this order in the twenty (20) news commentary texts that were analysed. This shows that they are essential to the creation of a news commentary text.

Optional Elements: (CL) ^ (PC). (SE)

The round brackets () show optionality of the elements, while the dot (.) means more than one option in sequence, that is, the occurrence of these elements varied in the analysed texts. In the texts where these elements were not found, the texts were still found to be meaningful. Although they contribute to the development of the texts, they are not essential to the creation of the texts.

Therefore, the Generic Structure Potentials (GSP) of Radio Nigeria news commentaries can be viewed as:

[AI] ^ (CL) ^ [O] ^ [S] ^ [(PC). (SE)] ^ [RL]

The above schema can be interpreted in statements that news commentaries on Radio Nigeria usually have:

- i. segment for anchor's introduction where the writer and presenter as well as the topic will be introduced;
- ii. orientation section which will dwell on the antecedents of the topic and definition of concepts in the text;
- iii. a segment that will spotlight the main idea of the news commentary substantiated by instances and examples; and
- iv. segment where recommendations will be made or various lessons will be drawn out as the orientation of the news commentary may predict.

CONCLUSION

The identified elements show a progression from the general statement into a sequenced explanation of how things have been to how things are now and what can be done to salvage the situation. The obligatory resolution or moral lesson entails statements that can be held on to for necessary adjustments and corrections bothering on some fundamental issues about Nigeria's national life. News commentaries constitute an important sub-genre of broadcast text and the writers of this sub-genre have mastered the art such that one can conveniently identify a news commentary as distinct from other sub-genres of broadcast media texts.

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