DERTERMINER PHRASE IN THE IGBO LANGUAGE

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Abstract
The study particularly investigates how determiners are projected into DP, makes a definition of DP and examines the elements describable as DP. Through the framework of X₁ theory and the parametric method of analysis, the work presents a research on determiner phrase (DP) in the Igbo language. Determiners were formerly viewed as the specifiers and modifiers of the noun phrase in phrase structure syntax. There was no phrase as DP. In modern times, the element determiner has been projected to phrases of related types. This has been done for many languages but no such study has been carried out in this regard for the Igbo language. The work discovers that the element determiner is projected into phrases through projecting all lexical categories into related types. Determiner Phrase in Igbo refers to any element or any phrase used to specify or modify other items in a construction. The elements of DP in the language include demonstratives, possessives/genitive, adjectives, numbers, quantifiers, deixis, pronoun etc. The demonstrative in Igbo has a more definite sense than other elements of DP. The demonstratives “A已是hụ” and “a” can be used with all other determiners in Igbo except the pronouns. The language has no element to express a definite feature comparable to the English definite article (the).

Background
Determination is a concept employed in linguistic studies to explain the kind of referent a noun phrase has. Edumondson (1989) says that determiners exhibit a sensitivity of structuring the real world entities that speakers and hearers exploit when making their references unambiguous to one another. This structuring sets the parameters with which the logical uniqueness of definite description holds. It is pertinent to note that in any interaction, the situation demands clarity with regard to the reference of the identity of the items mentioned in discourse. Referentiality of the identity is not limited to items only; discourse situations also make reference to the identity of location (space), person and time. In other words, it involves all those features of language which orientate our utterances in the context of proximity of space and time. This is why Lyons (1977) contends that determination is not regarded as exclusive to the identity of items. The function of identifying, making explicit or picking out items from among others solely belong to a group of words called determiners (Det).

Determiners are important elements in linguistic and language studies. In creative literary works for instance, the use of “the” in the opening of chapters in novels are techniques by which the reader appears to be drawn into a world already existing-(Katie 1991). The fields of pragmatics, sociolinguistics etc. use Det for an assumed general knowledge of the speaker and the hearer. This element of language (determiner) remains the indicator of ‘given’ and new information in many languages and needs to be accounted for. In syntax, a distinction is made between the class categories and the functional categories. Det are grouped under functional categories and are not allowed to project into phrases. In other words, there is no phrase as Determiner Phrase (DP) in Phrase structure syntax. In literature, the early works of Chomsky (1957) generative syntax and the works of the following scholars: Lyons (1968), Emenanjo (1978), Jackendoff (1977), Stockwell (1986), Radford (1988), Mbah (1999), Finch (2000) etc. treated Det as modifiers, specifiers or complementizers of the noun phrase (NP). Furthermore, the concept of DP in one language may differ slightly or to a great extent from another language in that, an element conceived as a determiner in one language may be an adjective in another language.

level of DP, define the concept of DP in Igbo and investigate the elements that constitute DP in the language.

Statement of Problem
In communication, the speaker usually wants the listener to understand the exact entity to which he refers to in discourse. He achieves this by the use of certain groups of grammatical elements referred to as determiners, to avoid being misunderstood. Determiners restrict the meaning of an entity by limiting the reference. Berk (1999: 58) observes that “Det. add information to the particular entity in discourse and therefore breaks down the complexity of certain ambiguous information”. This vital role notwithstanding, the theory of phrase structure in the early times of generative grammar limited its operations. The frame work gave prominence only to the projections of main word categories inhibiting the expansion of other structural words like Det, INFL, Comp, Intensifiers, etc. With the development in syntax, a debate in the study of phrase structure concerning the obliquriness of functional projections has motivated the interest of researchers. Radford (1981), Chomsky (1989), Cook (1988) and Mbah (2006) argue that all lexical categories can be projected into phrases of related types. Carnie (2007) claims that the NP is the complement of Det head. The above researchers have drawn attention to the place and nature of DP in languages. While there exists vast literature on the DP in many languages, the situation is not so in some others. These closed set but very important grammatical elements under discourse have received attention in many languages whereas in some, little or no information exists on it. One of such languages where the DP has not received elaborate attention is Igbo.

It must be pointed out that any language that makes use of determiners must be adequately and comprehensively accounted for syntactically because no element of language is useless. The determiner is part and parcel of the projections of the syntactic structure of the Igbo language; its nature and syntactic ramifications must be carefully studied and recorded. This will help to give it (DP) its rightful place in the study of the syntax of the language. This, as far as the researcher knows, has not been done. It is therefore the dearth of information on this aspect of the syntactic description of the Igbo language that prompted the present study (DP in the Igbo language). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to: examine how determiners in Igbo project to the level of DP, define the concept of DP in Igbo and investigate the elements that constitute DP in the language.

Theoretical Study
A determiner (Det) refers to a group of words that introduces nouns. It is that lexical category that makes reference to a noun. Younge (1985) postulates that the surest way to identify a noun is its ability to combine with words that belong to a class called determiners. This implies that the identity of a noun in a construction is made easy by its co-occurrence with a determiner. Crystal (1997) and Berk (1999) observe that Det is a grammatical category which includes a number or rather different kinds of words that always precede a noun and an adjective. Because of the limited number of categories the phrase structure framework allows, Radford (1981) laments that this framework (PS) is too unconstrained in the sets of possible phrase structure rules it permits. With syntactic development, the projection principle states that all lexical categories project into phrases of related types, Mbah (2011:211) observes that a “noun cannot project into a phrase whose nucleus is a verb or a preposition”. Abney (1987) claims that Det is not actually inside the NP; instead, it heads its own phrasal projection. Carnie (2007) in reformulating the phrase structure rules advocated for the extension of the X-bar theory. He proposed a DP where the specifier position will be used to mark a particular grammatical function: that of subjects. In the light of this postulation, he claims that the NP instead, is the complement to the Det head.

In recent proposals of an X-bar system, Det as specifier or complement of the NP has been upgraded to head its own lexical projection and it is seen as one of the obligatory categories of the sentence. Writing on this, Hudson (1994) says that Det should be regarded as ahead of NP which then would be called DP from Det. DP according to Trask (1993:17) is the “maximal projection of lexical category Det: the preferred label for NP analysis in which Det is regarded as the head of such a phrase. Bussman (1998) notes that DP denotes a grammatical category used to make reference to the entity in question. The implication is that DP is a functional phrase which consists of determiner elements. DP acts as the head of a sentence or Det projection. Abney (1987) postulates that the concept of a functional category (D) selecting a complement NP predicts the linear ordering of elements within the English DP. He argues for the independent category of D (Determiner), which is related to NP analogously to the category of I (Inflection), which is related to
VP. D specifies the NP for its referential properties. Radford (2004:114), while agreeing with Abney’s view notes that “bare nouns must be DP’s”. He refers to the bare nouns as null determiners. Franks (1995) writing on bare nouns in Cantonese postulates that bare nouns are barred from the subject position. Katie (1989:115), discussing the elements of DP contends that “DP covers a closed class of grammatical items in the nominal group including articles, demonstratives…modifiers, quantity as well as possessives”. Montague (1990) opines that there are several word categories that are discovered to constitute part of DP such as determiners, pronouns as well as noun phrases. Thomas (1989) claims that Demonstratives such as this and that, or genitives such as ‘my’ and ‘John’s’ are also determiners, and are associated with the definite reference. The elements that comprise DP therefore includes the article (Art) the, a, an; the Demonstratives (Dem) that, those, these; the Genitives (Gen) His, her, their, my, your; the Deictic elements –there, here, etc. the quantifiers and numbers. Having reviewed the views of the above scholars on the concept and the elements of DP, we present the empirical studies.

Empirical studies
The syntax and the elements that constitute DP in languages are not the same. Montague (1989) asserts that in English, DP is the parent phrase of a noun phrase. He argues that although the syntactic properties of an element is considered on the basis of its semantic properties, there are many elements which might be considered to be the syntactic head of a phrase even though they are not semantically the most important word. Consider the phrase “cups of tea”. Semantically, the noun “tea” is the most important element in this phrase. It is the “tea” that gets drunk not a “cup” yet syntactically, “cup” is the head of the phrase containing “tea” as the complement. The foregoing implies that the most important semantic word is not always the syntactic head. Horrocks (1989) in support of this says that in English, Det as the head of phrase captures its position perfectly because it precedes the noun that heads its complement. The major determiners in English are “the”, “a” and “an”. One of the properties of DP in English is its ability to make distinction between definiteness and indefiniteness. Napoli (1996) observes that some Det are definite while others are not. Davis and Dresser (2005) observe that Javanese and Madurese determiner phrases display an array of possibilities in ordering of their internal constituents. In both languages, numbers and quantifiers can both precede and follow head nouns. Preposition and adjectival modifiers are found within DPs, they also occur as the predicate of a related clause modifier. Consider the construction from Javanese examples as culled from (Davis and Dresser 2005:16):

1. Atin tuku sepeda sing tuwa
   Akin bought an old bike

The definite element in Javanese and Mandurese according to Bernstein (1979), Ritter (1991) and Longobardi (1994) is a particle – (n) e/s/- (na) suffixed to the head as in the following Javanese constructions:

2. Kucing - e/s nyolong iwak
   Cat-def past—steal fish
   The cat stole some fish

It is the “D” (e/s) which contains the feature for definiteness realized as the definite suffix on the N (kucing). They observe that the definite article also occurs in possessive constructions and that deitic demonstratives such as iku / rowa “that” and iki / reya “this” are used in the language. We observe therefore observe that the elements of DP in Javanese and Mandurese include the articles (both the definite and indefinite), demonstratives, the possessives, numbers and quantifiers. Their syntactic structures are such that Det position the NP as occupying the spec position in the structure. Javanese/Mandurese operate head-initial parameters in DP word order.

Sanusi (1988) writing on the genitive-case marking in Batonu (spoken in the Republic of Benin) discusses genitives as DPs. The genitives carry markers to indicate possession. The markers in the language are: “-m, -n and n”.

In English as Sanusi observes, the genitive case marking of non-pronominal Noun Phrases (NPs) / Determiner Phrases (DPs) in Batonu is carried out by inflecting a possessive marker (normally a syllabic nasal consonant) on the genitive nouns in the language. The example below is reproduced from Sanusi (1988:128)

\[ 3a \ [ali-m boo-ge] b) bake-n duro wi ]

all poss. goat bake poss. husband

Ali’s goat Bake’s husband
Here the ‘m’ in ‘3a’ and ‘n’ in ‘b’ are the possessive markers in Batou when they are suffixed with a hyphen to a noun. Mensa (2009) writing on determiners in Efik observes that there are no indefinite articles “a” or “an” in Efik but there is the definite article “oro” (the) which has a demonstrative function. He argues that only two types of determiners can be identified in the language: demonstratives and numerals. He maintains that there is a three-way opposition of demonstratives in Efik and using Zlatic’s (1997) classification, he lists them as follows:

4a e’s.mi/---this (spatial/temporal or proximal demonstrative)
b o’s.ro/---that/the (medial distance)
c o’s.ko/---over there (distal demonstration)

The three specifications relate directly to the semantic notions of proximity, further away and remote respectively. Zlatic (1997:45) notes that “…for expressing the indefiniteness of singular NPs, some languages use the numeral, one from which the indefinite article has been derived historically”. According to Mensa, Efik is one of such languages. The most common lexical device that is used in expressing indefiniteness is the use of numeral kiet “one”. It is both a cardinal number and an indefinite article. In Yoruba, there is only one determiner comparable to the English definite article. It is ‘na
s.s/’.

Discussing the process of genitive marking in the language, it is expedient to note that the derivation of the vowel morpheme that functions as a genitive case-marker has been a subject of controversy among scholars working on Yoruba grammar. For instance, Bamgbose (1990) postulates that the vowel that functions as a genitive case-marker in Yoruba could be derived either - by vowel lengthening or vowel assimilation, depending on the phonological environment in which the genitive construction is taking place. According to him, it is the last vowel of a possessed noun, in a genitive construction, that functions as a genitive case-marker in Yoruba. But Awobuluyi (1982) argues that the vowel functioning as a genitive case-marker, in any Yoruba genitive construction, is derived through a single process of vowel assimilation rather than vowel lengthening. Abo (2004) says that Yoruba has a proximate demonstrative ‘yi/irs/’ (this) and a distal demonstrative yiut (that). These demonstratives can be marked for plurality (these and those) just like English demonstratives.

DP in Igbo differs from what obtains in many Indo European languages. Mbah (2006) observes that the Igbo language does not have determiners as used in Indo European languages in association with common nouns. He goes further to say that there is no particular class of lexical items which is describable as adjectives because of its peculiar syntactic position. Nouns and adverbs also perform adjectival functions in the language. Example from Mbah (2006:81):

5a. N’s ri a/sh bu a/za u/ri n/ku ọ/ke -- (This food carries stock fish)
(b) O’s. m/u/ri nw a/ri ọke ọ/ke -- (She gave birth to a male child.)

The word ‘n’s.ku’ and O’s.ke in (5a) and (b) are nouns in isolation although in the sentence above, they perform the function of adjectives. As we can observe O’s.ke partiiliarizes the type or the specie of the item which places the items as determiners. Mbah contends that to avoid the ambiguity of whether n’s.ku’s and O’s.ke’s should be regarded as nouns, adjectives and qualifiers; it is better to use the term ‘determiner’. He argues that any lexeme in Igbo used to pin down the lexical item described, could be called a determiner.

The study agrees strongly with Mbah’s definition of DP in Igbo as any lexeme that helps to pin down the element described, so as to distinguish it from other lexical items. The work incorporates not only lexemes but also phrases that act in the same capacity. The study, therefore, sees DP in Igbo beyond the constituents: articles, demonstratives, etc. as used in Indo European languages to include several other categories and phrases which identify objects, persons, numbers, places, positions, time, etc. Eze (1998) writing on demonstratives in Igbo posits that Igbo has no overt definite articles although definiteness is sometimes indicated with the use of demonstrative which follows the noun. He asserts that adjectives, possessives quantifiers, etc. are determining and pre-poses the noun. Emenanjo (1978) and Ogbala (1982) opine that the class of demonstratives is very small which are made up of two deixis only. They are ‘a’ (this) and ‘a’hu. Obiamalu (2010), discussing the status of ‘nke’ in Igbo nominal phrase argues that ‘nke’ is not a particularizer as described in Oluike (1979) but a DP. He observes that “n’ke/” is a ‘D’ comparable with ‘s’ genitive marker in English. He (Obiamalu 2010:4) gave the structure of DP as follows:
The review shows that the elements of DP vary from language to language. However, there are many similarities between them. In some languages, a distinction is made between definite and indefinite determiners; English, Javanese, Batonu, etc. for instance, have both definite and indefinite patterning. Languages such as Efik, and Italian have no indefinite articles, Chinese has no articles (both the definite and indefinite). The syntax of DP differs from language to language. Some languages (Yoruba, Chinese, Batonu Igbo etc.) display a word order of head-initial while English display a head-final word order. We, observe that genitive case marking takes two forms in English, while it takes a single form in most languages. Some languages such as English and Javanese use inflection in marking possession.

From the above definition of DP, the work using the projection of all lexical items into phrases tries to identify the elements that constitute the DP in Igbo.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts X-bar scheme which is a subset of government and binding model developed by Chomsky (1970). This generative theory of grammar was popularized by Jackendoff (1977) and Chomsky (1981). It is a theory about the internal structure of syntactic constituents which was originally intended to place constraints on the power of phrase structure rules. It captures the insights that all phrases share some essential structural properties, that phrase structure can be reduced to recursive specifier-head configurations as below (reproduced from Ndimele 1992:14)

marked by one or more primes (X\textsuperscript{i} and X\textsuperscript{ii}) called bars, thus X\textsuperscript{i} is pronounced X-bar, X\textsuperscript{ii} = X-double bar, etc. The head is called zero projection (written as X\textsuperscript{O}). The top node X\textsuperscript{ii} (or XP) is called the maximal projection of X. All other projections between the head and the maximal projections are called intermediate projections. The sisters of X are called the complements of the head and the sisters of X\textsuperscript{i} are the specifiers of the phrase.

In X-bar convention, X stands for any lexical category symbols. Jackendoff (1977) notes that the value of X ranges over at least the lexical categories of N, A, V, P, etc. The main tenet of the theory is summarized as below:

(i) Each phrase XP has one obligatory element: the head X\textsuperscript{O} of the phrase
(ii) There is a maximal projection or X-maximal corresponding to the phrase node (XP).
(iii) All other elements within the XP besides the head are structurally optional.
The advantage of $X^1$ model over PSG is that $X^1$ convention argues for the existence of intermediate categories which are larger than the word but smaller than the phrase, the major objective of this theory is to make provision for these categories that fall between the lexical category (minimal) and the phrasal category (maximal-max).

**Concept and Elements of Determiner Phrase in Igbo**

A phrase is a sequence of words joined together following the rules of the grammar of a language. Phrases are named after a class of word which has a primary as well as obligatory function within it. The obligatory element (the head) can stand for the whole construction. Mbah (2006:110) observes that “each category has a head which is both obligatory in the construction and which characterizes the structure as a whole”. Sentences are built out of phrases belonging to the corresponding set of phrasal categories. Radford (1981) postulates that a phrase is a set of elements which forms a constituent without placing any barrier on the number of elements. It is a salient part of grammatical constructions. Linguistic economy is achieved through phrases which can be recursively generated. By recursiveness, we mean that the grammatical process of repeating an application in deriving a sentence is limitless. In this section, we shall discuss the concept and the elements of Determiner Phrase in the language.

Determiner phrase in Igbo is a cover term used to refer to any element or syntactic phrase which distinguishes an item from other items. The concept of DP as reformulated by this study goes beyond the constituents (articles, demonstratives, quantifiers, possessives/genitives, numbers, deictics etc.) used as determiners in Indo-European languages to include several other categories and phrases (nominal, adverbial, adjectival, pronominal phrases and relative clauses) which identify objects, persons, numbers, places, positions, time, etc. In other words, we argue that any element used to single out an item from other items is referred to as DP. Consider the construction below:

8. EỊwu ojii ta ra e de m
   Goat black eat past cocoyam my
   That black goat ate my cocoyam.

In ‘8’, ‘ojii’ though regarded as an adjective is determining in the context of use. It singles out a particular goat out of several other goats. ‘M’ in the sentence also determines the ownership of the item ‘cocoyam’; therefore, both the adjective and the pronoun are determiners. DP is therefore a category that can dominate the following elements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstratives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deixis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitives/Posse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs of time and place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal adjectives/ Pronouns/Relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantifiers and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstratives**

Demonstratives (Dem) in Igbo have determiner function and constitute rich source of Igbo DP. They indicate which entities the speaker refers to and distinguish those entities from others. Igbo nouns are not actually marked in any way as in English to show if they are singular (chair) or plural (chairs), definite (the knife) or indefinite (a knife). However, in most cases, the speaker needs to make it clear whether she or he is talking about one single item or more than one item, a particular item as opposed to another or all items, an item close by or far away. They are employed for special deixis that is, using the context of physical surrounding of the speaker and the hearer. Emenanjo (1978) and Ogbalu (1982) writing on demonstratives in Igbo note that they are very small and are made up of two deitics only: ‘a’ (this) and ‘a nd ah’ (that). The constituent ‘n nd a’ is combined with the two demonstratives for plurality thus: ‘n nd a’ (these) and ‘ndj ah’ (those). In the language, demonstratives make a two-way distinction as we
observed in the elements above; one set (aRY, nɔ̃ di aSa) is proximal (near to the speaker) while the other set (ahu, ndị ahụ) is distal (away from the speaker). We shall discuss their use in different contexts under the following sub-headings

**Proximal demonstratives:** They are the class of demonstratives which refer to both singular and plural entities close to the speaker. When a speaker wishes to specify that the item referred to in discourse is a singular/plural noun/s s/he uses ‘aRY’. See illustrations below:

10a. Nwạṣa tà a bu nwa m
- Child this is child my
- This is my child

The construction above (10a) is represented structurally below:

```
N1
    | D1
    |    | N1
N2
    |    | D1
    |    |    | N1
    |    |    |    | D1
```

b. Ie te a wara awa s.
- Pot this break break
- This pot is broken.

In sentence ‘10c’ ‘ndị’ is used with ‘a’ to show plurality/entirety, it is not a demonstrative.

**Distal demonstratives**
They belong to the class of demonstratives which refer to both singular and plural entities away from the speaker. Entities under this sub-heading are referred to using the demonstrative ‘ahu’.

11a. Mọ ma ashu di n kọ s.
- Knife that is sharp
- That knife is sharp

b. Aṣkwa n di ahu akas alla nka
- Cloth those old perf old
- Those clothes are old

c. Eme ẹ nike aṣhụ bijara ụṣka
- Emenike that come past church
- That Emenike came to church
From the data above, we observe that ‘nwata’ in ‘22a’, ‘ite’ in ‘b and ‘c’ are items whose positions are distinguished in relation to other items by the speaker using the proximal deictic determiner ‘a’. Ahụ and ndị ahụ in ‘23a, b and c’ pin down the particular entities in question. They are determining in the context of use.

Deixis
Deixis refers to the term which covers features of language that make reference to the time or spatial characteristics whose meaning implications depend on the situation of utterance. Bussman (1996) observes that the deictic expression is a term adopted by CS Pierce from logic for linguistic expressions that refer to the personal, temporal and spatial aspect of any given utterance. It deals with linguistic expressions which are characterised by time, person and place. Ugwuanyi (2011) postulates that demonstrative pronouns and adverbs of place are used to mark deictic expressions. Deictic elements are part of Igbo DP and will be discussed under the following headings:

Personal Deixis
Bussman (1996) contends that among the many kinds of deictic expressions are the personal pronouns. Ugwuanyi (2011) Personal pronouns are pronouns that refer to the person speaking. The personal deictic pronouns in the language is marked by the following pronouns: ‘m/mụ’ (1), i/i (you), o/o (s/he), u/ụ (you(pl), a/ànyi (we) and ha (they). In communicative event, the situation of utterance is generally egocentric in the sense that the role of the speaker-hearer alternates in the conversation between them. If a speaker first assumes the egocentric role, the hearer in turn assumes the same such that the centre of the deictic system switches. Anyone among them who happens to be the speaker on each occasion becomes the center of the situation of utterance; therefore, deictic are defined with respect to him/her. In Igbo, these pronouns are classified from the point of view of the speaker. They are divided into first, second and third persons. In personal pronouns, there is one for subjective (the nominative case) and another form for the objective case. They also have the distinction of singularity and plurality. Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>m/mụ</td>
<td>anyị</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>gi, i/ị</td>
<td>unu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>o, ya</td>
<td>ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consider the constructions below:

12a. Zu/ụ/ta/ra m/kwụkwọ
   Buy for me book (Buy a book for me)

b. U/ụ/zu/ụ/o/hi
   You (pl) steal past (You people stole)
She grows tall (She is tall)

The pronouns in '12a, b and c' including other personal deictic pronouns are also determiners because they are points of reference. They serve the primary function of identifying the speaker, hearer, person or thing referred to in the context. However, some of them such as 'ọ/o', ha etc. can be used anaphorically in discourse. It is also observed that gender distinction is not marked in Igbo personal pronominal system. Number distinction is also marked apart from person. The singular and the plural forms are not morphologically related.

**Temporal Deixis**

The temporal deictic element is the type that distinguishes time with reference to the speaker. Usually in communication, the meaning of words is interpreted relative to the temporal situation at which the communication act occurs. Time and tense are implied in deictic expressions. Spatial deixis are the type expressed with demonstrative pronouns and adverbs of place. We have already discussed pronouns in ‘3.2.1’ above. We shall discuss the place adverbs in another section.

**Genitives**

The genitives (Gen) in Igbo can be categorized into two: ‘nke’ (neutral possessive/Det marker- my, our, their) and the pronouns. Nke is a linguistic item used in a variety of Igbo constructions especially in an NP to give reference to an item in discourse. Oluikpe (1979) contends that it is a particularizer but Obiamalu (2010) contends that it is a genitive DP; it is a ‘D’ comparable with ‘s’ genitive marker in English. Its occurrence can be found in nominal phrases, relative clause constructions as well as ‘ke du’ cleft questions. Consider the constructions below:

13a. Aka nke Uche (Uche’s cloth)

- b. Ji (nke) Okonkwo ko rq (The yam that okonkwo cultivated.)
- c. Ke du onye (nke) Chike gwa ra (whom did chike tell.)

In the above constructions, ‘13a’ is a nominal phrase; ‘b’ is a relative clause while ‘c’ is a cleft question. ‘Nke’ in ‘13a’ shows possession, in ‘b and c’, it does not show though it is determining, therefore, it is not in every instance that ‘nke’ is a genitive possession comparable with ‘s’ genitive marker in English. However, the native speakers use ‘nke’ more often in everyday conversations so the work argues it is one of the genitive markers in Igbo though not in a strict sense.
Nke and the Demonstrative

In Igbo, the Dem co-occurs freely with ‘nke’. The two elements are used together to perform deictic function of pointing to an item close or far away from the speaker. Though they co-occur, nke is very optional in such constructions. Below are illustrations.

14a  oche (n ≠ ke)s a ≠
   chair Gen Dem
   This chair

   b. o ≠ fe (n ≠ ke)s a ≠ hu ≠
      soup (Gen) that
      that soup.

‘Nke’ in Igbo Relative Clause

A relative clause is a type of clause (most often a subordinate clause) which is used to modify a noun phrase. It is usually introduced by a wh-word (who, which) or a complementizer ‘that’. Sometimes, it may not contain an overt wh-word.

15a. Nweke hụ nwunye nke Obi (ka )
   b. Nwunye nke obi ka ≠ Nwe ≠ ke hụ ≠ ru
      Wife Gen Obi that Nweke see rv past
      The wife of Obi that Nweke saw
   c. A ≠ gwo n ≠ ke ≠ s. tara N ≠ ke ≠ chi anwọ ≠ s -la
      Snake that bite Nkechi die perf
      The snake that bite Nkechi is dead.

From the data above, we observe that ‘nke’ in ‘15a-c’ is an overt ‘D’ as seen in simple DP constructions in the language. It can also co-occur with the Dem ‘a’ or ‘ahx’ as in ‘14a and b’. We also note that relative clauses involve the movement of either a wh- or a complementizer from the object position to the initial position of the clauses they introduce. The complementizer ‘ka’ in ‘15a’ moved (topicalized) to clause initial in ‘b’.

Adjectives and Adjectival Phrases

Adjective in Igbo, according to Emenanjo (1978:70) is made up of five words, four of which divide up neatly into two pairs of antonyms.

a ≠ s jọ ≠ /ọ s jọ /s - bad
ọ s ma - good/beautiful
ọ s cha - white
ọ s jii ọ p - black
u s kwu - big

Anukwu’s (1984) classification of adjectives divided into three contrastive pairs. By this contrasts, he had six words instead- a ≠ s jọ ≠ /ọ jọ /s - o s ma, ọ s cha /ọ s jii ọ p, u s kwu /h s ta ≠.

In traditional sense, an adjective is a word that qualifies a noun. In recent time its function has extended to the determination of the entity being referred to in discourse. Mbah (1992:70) writing on the syntactic...
position of N° observes that gerundive nominals such as ‘ajo’, ‘otu’ and m·n·kwu’ function as heads rather than modifiers when they occur initially. Mbah (2006:31) further observes that adjectives provide additional information about the subject under discourse. He asserts that ajo/ajo can function as a head of a phrase. In other words ‘ajo’ has both nominal and determiner function in Igbo.

Consider the following constructions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrases</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16a. Nwo·ke· ojii</td>
<td>Dark complexioned man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. A·jo· nwa·anyi</td>
<td>Bad woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. N·kwu· m·madu</td>
<td>Rich person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. A·ta· na</td>
<td>lamb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjectival nouns as ogologo, obodobo, mkpμkμ are also determiners in Igbo. Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrases</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17a. Osisi o·golo</td>
<td>Long stick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. O·do· M·kpμkμ</td>
<td>Short pestle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. U·zo· o·bodobo</td>
<td>Wide road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the phrases above (17a-c), it is worthy to note that the elements ‘ogolo, mkpμkμ, and obodobo’ are adjectival nouns used to pin down the entities which they refer to. The det ogologo, obodobo and mkpμkμ can function as heads if they occupy sentence-initial position. However, they will then require complements to express their full meaning. There are also Nominal Adjectives; they are nouns that modify other nouns. In some constructions (associative), they are seen as associative nominals.

Nominal Adjectives

Nominal adjectives and phrases are determining in the Igbo language. Some have more define sense than others. Consider the constructions below:

18a. N·kwo· Newi· (Nkwo market at Newi)  
18b. U·ju· oke·ke (Uju- Okeke’s daughter)  
18c. U·lo· ogwu· (Hospital /House of medicine)

In the above constructions, ‘Newi’, ‘Okeke’ and ‘Ogwu’ in ‘18a-c’ are determiners in the contexts they are used. The determiners determine the particular ‘Nkwo’, ‘uju’ and ‘ulo’ which the speaker refers to.

Relative Clauses

DP in Relative Clause (RC)

A relative clause in Igbo is a subordinate clause which makes an assertion about its referent. In Igbo, RC displays two orderings: the position of DP can be clause initial. It is a DP preposed by an NP which comprises a clausal complement (CP). In another instance, the position is clause-final where the DP is post-posied by an NP. Consider the constructions below:

19a. A·jo· nwa· gburu me ya· (The bad child that killed his mother)  
19b. U·lo· atq· ukwu ah· (Those three big houses)

The DP positions in ‘19a and b’ are clause-initial and clause-final respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrases</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. (E·ze· kusu· ziri anyi</td>
<td>Eze who that taught us Igbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. (Nwa·a·nyi</td>
<td>) zuru oche m·</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. (E·e· buru µ·ko·) ha·</td>
<td>and ‘kuziri anyi Igbo’ are determiners in the context of use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place Adverbs

Adverbs of place are also used to mark spatial demonstratives. In other words, deictic place adverbs semantically identify spatial relationships between the speaker and the addressee. In the words of Mbah (2006:39), “the other method of generating adverb is by modifying the verb in terms of its place of occurrence”. He posits that this type of adverb in Igbo is marked by ‘ebe’. As noted earlier in ‘3.1’, there is a two-way contrast between the motion near the speaker (here) and away from the speaker (there). The Igbo distinction uses ‘ebe a’ (here) and ‘ebe ahu’ to express the notions. See examples below:

20a. Che· re· ebe a· (wait here)  
20b. Kwu·ru· ebe ahu· (wait there)  

‘Ebe a’ in ‘20a’ and ‘ebe ahu’ in ‘b’ identify the particular location motioned by the speaker. It is determining as it gives reference to the place.
Numbers and Quantifiers

21a. Atọ dum adum a (All three of these)
b. Ufo'sdu nwụsụru (Some that died)
c. ọse'se'se'se'se'se'se n'ime ha- (Five of them)

From the foregoing, we observe that determination in Igbo is not limited only to the two elements of Demonstrative 'a' and 'ahụ' as conceived earlier. It shows that other elements and phrases are equally used as determiners.

Findings and Conclusion

By this study DP in Igbo has undergone a shift from its traditional notion of being just a modifier, specifier, etc. of an NP to the level of heading its own projection. Following the data and the analysis presented, we summarize our findings as follows:

Determiner phrase in Igbo is a cover term used to refer to any element or syntactic phrase which distinguishes an item from among other items. In other words, any element used to single out an item amidst other items is referred to as DP. The elements describable as part of DP include: demonstratives, quantifiers, possessives/genitives, numbers, deictics, nouns/noun phrases, verb phrases, relative clauses, place adverbs, adjectives etc. The elements identify objects, persons, numbers, places, positions, time, etc.

The demonstrative ‘a’shụgụ’ and ‘a’ụụ’ have two-way distinction (proximal and distal) in Igbo just as in English.

Igbo nouns are not actually marked in any way as in English to show if they are singular (chair) or plural (chairs), definite (the knife) or indefinite (a knife). However, in most cases, the speaker makes it clear whether she or he is talking about one single item or more than one item, a particular item as opposed to another or all items, an item close by or far away. The deictic element that is used to make reference to a single entity close to the speaker is ‘a’ụụ’ while ‘n’sdı a’ụụ’, is used to mark its plurality. The singular element ‘a’shụgụ’ and its plural marker ‘ndị ahụ’ show the reference to an entity/entities far away from the speaker.

Genitive case in the language under study is not realized morphologically by affixation of some element to the noun phrase but by the use of lexical items. There is only one way of marking possessives in Igbo unlike in English. The genitive ‘n’ụke’ is a DP element used to mark possessives though in many Igbo constructions it is optional especially when it occupies a position in-between two nominals. DP items such as ‘m/mụ, i/ị ị, unu, anyị, and ha’ also mark possession; these pronouns are classified from the point of view of the speaker. They are divided into first, second and third persons. In personal pronouns, there is one for subjective (the nominative case) and another form for the objective case. They also have the distinction of singularity and plurality.

Place adverbs are the type of DP elements used to distinguish a place from other places. They are deictic in nature and also have two-way distinction. The elements include: ‘ebe a’, ‘ebe ahụ’ for singularity and ‘ebe ndịa’, ‘ebe ndja ahụ’ for plurality. Only Dem can be used with all other determiners in Igbo except the pronouns. The language has no element to express a definite feature comparable to the English definite article (the).

An element in one language may find its equivalent in another. For instance, ‘n’ụke’ in Igbo is a ‘D’ element comparable to the ‘‘s’ genitive in English. DP in Igbo deviates from the universal grammatical form; a determiner in the language does not post-pose the noun. Any determiner found in word-initial position has a nominal function. Definite/indefinite patterning in many languages is either overtly or covertly expressed. In the language under study, definitization is covertly expressed.

In Conclusion, we have to point out that even though we tried to carry out an in-depth study on DP, we encourage others to make contributions in the area of study. For instance, one could get interesting input from Igbo dialects. Moreover, studies could be carried out on the same topic to either authenticate or add to the findings of the research.
References


**ABBREVIATIONS USED**

- **DP**: Determiner Phrase
- **NP**: Noun Phrase
- **Det /D**: Determiner
- **Dem**: Demonstrative
- **IP**: Infl(ection) Phrase
- **CP**: Complementiser Phrase
- **Comp**: Complement
- **Aux**: Auxillary
- **Spec**: Specifier
- **Art**: Article
- **Gen**: Genitive
- **Quant**: Quantifier
- **AP**: Adjectival Phrase
- **RC**: Relative Clause
- **VP**: Verb Phrase
- **D¹**: D-Double bar
- **D¹**: D-Single bar