

Aspectual Morphemes and Oppositions in Ìgbò

Maduabuchi Sennen Agbo

Department of Linguistics, University of Benin, Benin, Edo State, Nigeria.

maduabuchi.agbo@uniben.edu

Abstract

The consensus in Ìgbò aspectology is that the language has only four aspectual morphemes: *ga*, *na*, *la* and the five allomorphs of the reduplicated vowel (-rV) suffix. Nevertheless, a careful look at Ìgbò verb morphology and semantics reveals that other morphemes exist which encode aspect and aspectual oppositions. Therefore, this study investigates the morphosemantic representations of these morphemes in Ìgbò and the aspectual contrasts therein. The data for the study comes from spoken Ìgbò in Ìgbò language movies. The intuitive knowledge of the author is also a source of data. The data was transcribed and presented to native speakers for grammaticality judgements. The approach to data analysis is descriptive since the objective is to identify these aspects within the facts of Ìgbò. Ten morphemes are described and broadly categorised as durative and terminative morphemes. The durative morphemes are *zíé*, *gídé*, *gásíá*, *nwù* and *ká*, while the terminative morphemes include, *gó*, *dèbè*, *tù*, *chá*, and *zùó*. The durative morphemes encode the aspectual oppositions of continuous-nonstatic, continuous-static, abilitative, pluractional and superlative. The terminative morphemes encode the oppositions of the terminative-inchoative, cessative, restrictive, conclusive and completive. These aspectual oppositions are not exhaustive since the study is based on data from only five dialects of the language. However, the study is a contribution from Ìgbò to the cross-linguistic study of aspects and also a basis for further investigation of the derivational and inflectional features of Ìgbò aspectology, aktionsart and aspect and also the syntax of telicity.

Keywords: Aspect, morpheme, oppositions, inchoative, terminative

1.0 Introduction

According to Comrie (1976:3) “aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation.” For Comrie (1976:8) every language has the formal means for the representation of aspect in the grammar. These formal devices are expressed in different terms and terminologies. In other words, the expression of aspect has no universally accepted terminology. It is crucial in discussing aspect to focus on the distinctions or oppositions between states, events and processes, which are otherwise termed situations. A state is a stable or continuous circumstance, which remains so until it is changed. Events and processes represent constantly changing circumstances that demand the constant infusion of energy to retain their dynamism. The difference between an event and a process lies with the way the circumstance is conceptualised. Events are viewed as whole and complete situations and the term perfectivity is ascribed to it. Processes, on the other hand, are viewed as continuously changing situations and the term imperfectivity is ascribed to this situation.

Comrie (1976) clarifies these terms. The perfective is an action that is both complete and with a result at the same time. The imperfective has two sub-divisions: the habitual and continuous. The habitual is an action that takes place over a long time to the extent that the situation referred to is characterised with this period of time. This characteristic is usually conceptual in design and not linguistic. The continuous, on the other hand, refers to a constantly changing situation. However, there are two types of continuousness: the progressive and non-progressive. In the progressive-continuous aspect, the situation is viewed as changing and non-static, while in non-progressive-continuous, it is viewed as changing but static.

Comrie (1976) also describes other terms, for example, the perfect which refers to “a past situation which has a present relevance,” and durativity, which describes the conception of the length of time of a given event. Durativity is contrasted with punctuality which is conceived of as an event not lasting in time. Punctual situations have zero length of time, however, they denote an automatic change of state.

Kortmann (1991) gives a semantic-functional definition in which aspect is described in terms of the semantic distinction from each other and how languages grammatically express the notion of aspect. For Kortmann (1991:19): “aspect is a grammatical category; non-deictic; concerned with situation-internal time; presentation of some situation as incomplete/in progress/existent (from within) or complete (from without) at a given point/period in time”.

Dahl (1985:89) points out that the perfective and imperfective subcategories are not inflectional but rather derivational. Moreso, (Dahl 1985: 71-72, 84-89) differentiates between aspect across languages. These include the perfective:imperfective, the progressive, the conclusive, habituais and generics. It assumes the definition in Comrie (1976:16) that: “Perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole, without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation, while the imperfective pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation.” Dahl (1985:92) also adopts Comrie (1976) sense of progressivity as a special case of imperfectivity where the difference lies in duration of the events or processes.

The conclusive indicates situations that mean ‘to finish doing something’ or ‘to close’. It also means ‘to do something completely.’ It includes ‘to leave’ or ‘to die’. The habituais express actions that take place habitually or repeatedly. Generic sentences are represented as timeless situations. Dahl (1985) describes all these aspectual distinctions *cum* oppositions with various subdivisions.

The concept of aspect is a recurring issue in a number of prominent publications in Ìgbò grammar. Emenanjo (1978) identifies a number of aspectual oppositions in the language. The major aspects identified are the indicative, progressive, future, unfulfilled, imperative and hortative. For Emenanjo (1981), the important aspects include the simple, past anticipative and unfulfilled. These plethora of aspects are motivated by the formal devices in Ìgbò that express aspectual distinctions. These devices have influenced other scholars to confirm the aspects identified in Emenanjo (1978; 1981).

Nwachukwu (1983) identifies the stative, which richochets Emenanjo’s (1981) simple aspect. Uwalaka (1988) discusses assertive and benefactive aspects which are akin to the past aspect of Emenanjo (1981). The progressive and habitual aspects mentioned in Eme and Mbagwu (2008) are motivated by Emenanjo’s (1978) progressive aspects. Onumajuru (2011) describes stativity which echoes the concepts in Nwachukwu (1983) and Emenanjo (1978). Mbah and Mbah (2012) explain perfective aspects and the notion therein reflects the concepts of Emenanjo (1978:1981). Obiamalu (2013) extensively discusses the indicative, durative, progressive, habitual, anticipative and perfective aspects. These, again, are motivated by concepts in Emenanjo (1978:1981), where the morphemes *ga*, *na*, *la* and the allomorphs of the reduplicated vowel (*-rV*) suffix are identified as Ìgbò aspectual morphemes. The consensus in Ìgbò grammar studies is that *ga* is involved in the expression of aspectual oppositions of the anticipative, the progressive and the continuous, while *na* indicates the oppositions of the progressive, the habitual and the durative depending on the morphosemantic structure. The morpheme *la* is used to indicate perfective aspect. The *-rV* suffix is involved in the expression of the stative, assertive, imperative and benefactive aspects within the context of the syntax and semantics. It is manifestly clear that these past studies have concentrated on the morphosyntactic coding of only four morphemes in the expression of aspect. This is the issue this study sets out to address, for there exists other aspectual morphemes, outside the four canonical morphemes, that encode aspectual notions, concepts and contrasts. This raises the question of the morphosemantic coding of these morphemes in the expression of aspectual opposition. Therefore, the specific objective of this study is to expand the scope of the morphosemantic coding of aspectual oppositions and contrasts in Ìgbò. This investigation just like past studies focuses on Ìgbò verb morphology and semantics.

1.1 The Concept of the Verb in Ìgbò

The assertion by Emenanjo (2005;1978; 1975) is that the ‘Ìgbò verb is made up of three mutually obligatory and complementary elements.’ These obligatory elements are the verb itself, the complement and the bound cognate noun (BCN). All Ìgbò verbs have the BCN, which always occur bound to the verb. Emenanjo (1978:129) stresses that in the surface structure the verb co-occurs with both the complement and the BCN or either of them. The claim here is that every Ìgbò verb must exist with a noun which always complements it.

1.1.1 Ìgbò Verb Morphosemantic Structure

The structure of Ìgbò is centred on the verb because the verb is the only part of speech which essentially occurs with its complements and also takes inflectional and derivational affixes. These affixes contribute to the dynamic nature of the Ìgbò verb. For example, the verbal prefixes express participles (Emenanjo 1978; 1985) and infinitives. Suffixes function to indicate the arguments of the verb in the clause and in some cases prepositions. In the light of available literature and the insights of this author, the morphological properties of reflect the basic conceptual units of the verb and morphology is at the interface between syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Ìgbò verbs have been classified into simple, complex and compound verbs. Simple verbs are affixless. The examples in (1a-c) below are simple verbs. Complex verbs comprise a simple verb with at least one affix. The examples in (2a-c) are complex verbs.

- | | | | |
|----|----|--------|----------------------|
| 1. | a. | tá | ‘chew’ |
| | b. | bá | ‘enter’ |
| | c. | dá | ‘call’ |
| 2. | a. | tà-bá | ‘begin to chew’ |
| | b. | bà-tá | ‘enter inside’ |
| | c. | kpò-té | ‘waken up (someone)’ |

The simple verbs in (1a-c) have their meanings modified by the suffixes attached to them. The verb root in (2a) is *tá* ‘chew’ but with the attachment of the suffix *bà*¹ the meaning incorporates ‘begin to chew’. In (2b) the verb root *bá* ‘enter’ extended in meaning when the suffix *tá* is attached to it. The new meaning of the suffixed verb is ‘enter inside.’ The root verbs *kpò* ‘call’ has its meaning modified as observed in (2c).

Compound verbs in Ìgbò have been described as comprising of two simple verbs which are independent. The illustrations in (3a-c) point this out by combining some simple verbs to derive compound verbs.

¹Ìgbò is a major Nigerian language. The transcription follows standard Ìgbò orthography: à (low tone); á (high tone); and ā downstep. All tones are marked to avoid ambiguity due to lexical variance among the dialects. Ìgbò has phonological features of vowel harmony where the eight vowels in the language are neatly divided into two sets. One set comprises vowels produced with the Advanced Tongue Root (+ATR) while the other set comprises vowels with –ATR. In standard Ìgbò, -ATR vowels are represented with the sub-dot, e.g. [ɔ̣] while the +ATR vowels do not have the sub-dot.

The abbreviations used here are: IND-indicative, DET-determiner, COP-copular, CONT-continuative, PLUR-pluractional, ABL-abilitative, FOC-focus marker, SUP-superlative, GEN-generic, SUBJ-subjunctive, CESS-cessative, RESTR-restrictive, CONCL-conclusive, COMPL-completive, IAM-iamative, 1s-First person singular, 2s-Second Person singular, 3s-Third person singular, 2pl-Second Plural, 3pl-Third plural

3	a.	dù-nyé	lead-give	‘present with’
	b.	wé-dà	bring-fall	‘bring down’
	c.	tì-wá	hit-break	‘shatter’

All the verbs in (3a-c) are described as compound verbs in the literature because they are independent simple verbs that are combined to derive new meanings. In (3a) the compound verb *dùnyé* is made up of two simple verbs with independent meanings. *Dù* means ‘lead’ while *nyé* means ‘give’ but a combination of both of them results in the meaning of the verb in (3a) which is ‘present with.’ The compound verb in (3b) is made up of the simple verbs *wé* ‘bring’ and *dà* ‘fall down’. A combination of both of them gives the meaning ‘bring down’ as illustrated in (3b). The compound verb *tì-wá* combines two simple verbs *tì* ‘hit’ and *wá* ‘break’ to give ‘shatter’.

The expositions in examples (1-3) above are morphological features of the Ìgbò verb as expounded in the literature. However, there are issues in this morphological classification of the verb. Mbah (1999:138) observes that the categorisation of a structure as simple, complex or compound verb is still an unresolved issue in Ìgbò grammar. There is no clear distinction between the the verb root and stem in the literature (Uwalaka 1997; Emenanjo 1978: 2005: 2015; Green and Igwe 1963 and Igwe and Green 1964). However, for Emenanjo (1978:136) there is a distinction between free and bound roots in the morphemic constituents of the verb. ‘A free root is any element which has an independent existence or meaning’. Again, Emenanjo (1985:64) defines the verb stem as the ‘central part of the verb to which all affixes are attached,’ while the verb root is the ‘part of the verb to which all affixes are attached.’ These definitions present a nebulous distinction between a verb root and a stem. If ‘all’ affixes are attached to the verb root, as contained in the definition, it means there is no difference between it and the verb stem.

Following the traditional definition of a stem as ‘the part of a complete word form that remains when an affix is removed.’ (Aranoff 1994:31) and the root on the other hand as comprised of elements which ‘make up the open-class vocabulary--- which are sequences of complexes of phonetic features along with abstract indices and other diacritics (Embick and Halle, 2003:2), this study distinguishes between a verb root and a verb stem in Ìgbò. With this definition, the Ìgbò verb root falls into the traditional structure ascribed to it, which is either a consonant-vowel (CV) or consonant-i/ɨ-vowel (CIV) (Emenanjo 1978:135). The CV or CIV is made up of a bundle of phonetic features which surface as the word class verb in the language. The root has no affix attached to it. This distinguishes it from the stem which has an affix attached to it. In other words, the stem stands for the various realisations of the root. This distinction between a stem and root straightforwardly accounts for the categorisation of Ìgbò verbs and contributes to the resolution of the issue of simple, complex or compound verbs. The claim here is that the hitherto known simple verb is simply a verb root while the hitherto known complex and compound verbs are verb stems. The examples (4a-c) show that verb stems are derivatives of the roots and a careful look at examples (2 and 3) shows that compound and complex verbs are different realisations or completion of the verb roots.

4.	a.	ché ‘think’	chè-tá	‘think-towards’	‘remember’
			ché-fù	‘think-lose’	‘forget’
			chè-zíé	‘think-right’	‘think about’
	b.	lé ‘look’	lé-bà	look-enter’	‘look into’
			lé-li	‘look-forfeit’	‘look-down’
			lé-fù	‘look-lose’	‘over look’

c.	rí ‘eat’	rì-bé	‘eat-begin’	‘start eating’
		rì-chá	‘eat-finish’	‘finish eating’
		rì-juó	‘eat-fill’	‘eat to satisfaction’

As (4a-c) shows, there are three realisations each of the the verb roots *ché, lé, rí*. The morphemes that are attached as suffixes to these verb roots function to give semantic integrity to the verbs. These examples represent the concept of stem in this paper.

In Emenanjo (2005; 1978; 1975) the noun complement and BCN are viewed as arguments and/or direct objects of the verb. However, based on the verb morphosyntax described in this section, this paper proffers that the argument of the verb is the participant in the clause that completely carries out or is affected by the action depicted by the the verb. Therefore, in this study, the noun complement is not an argument but a part of the verb that gives it semantic wholeness. Therefore, the noun complement functions as the stem described in this section. This will be made clearer in the subsequent analysis of the data for this study.

1.2 Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The data come from different sources including the discussions of Ìgbòspeakers in Ìgbòmovies on cable TV. The specific movies are: *Ugegbemmuo 1&2* and *EchichiÌgbò1&2* which are Ìgbòeze Productions lasting over one and half hours. Constructed examples from the author’s knowledge of the language is another source of data. The recorded speech of the Ìgbò actors in the movies were explored for data and 308 utterances containing 213 clauses were transcribed. The aspectual distinctions in each clause were identified and sorted into 36 illustrative single clauses and presented to 12 Ìgbò speakers for grammaticality judgment. These speakers are presently Ìgbò students of Linguistics in the University of Benin and they were on purpose selected from speakers spread across the Nnewi, Nsukka, Onitsha and Abakiliki dialects of the language. The analysis followed a purely descriptive framework in which the aspectual distinctions are described and analysed in terms of the facts of Ìgbò. This would be in consonance with the proposition of Comrie (1976) that every language has the technical means of expressing aspect in the grammar.

2.0 Aspectual Morphemes and Oppositions

The sub-sections below identify and describe ten morphemes involved in aspect and aspectual contrasts in the language. When these morphemes attach to verb roots and become stems, the resulting morpholexical structure denote an aspectual opposition. The aspectual morphemes are broadly categorised into durative and terminative morphemes. Section 2.1 describes the morpholexical and semantic features of durativity while 2.2 focuses on terminativity morphemes.

2.1 Durativity Morphemes

Durativity morphemes represent aspectual concepts of continuous and dynamic activities with some force. These morphemes semantically encode boundless activities. However, the morphosemantic reading of this boundlessness is conceptualised in varied forms. It is these varied conceptualisations that represent aspectual oppositions. The durativity morphemes identified for this study are all suffixal and include, *-zìé, -gídé, -gásia, -nwù* and *-ká*.

2.1.1 –zìé Continuous Non-static

The examples in (5a-d) represent durative situations that are continuous but non-static. They are continuous in the sense that the situations depict a kind of dynamism in which the changing situation is neither resisted nor restrained by any of the participants in the activities. It is non-static precisely because of

this non-resistance and the lack of restraint to the change. This aspect is termed continuative and the morpheme *-zié* suffixed to each of the verbs in (5a-d) is denotative of the aspectual concept.

5. a. Yá dì-zíé ótú áhù
3s COP-CONT way DET
'Let it remain that way'
- b. Yá gà-zíé-rí gí
3s go-CONT-IND 2s
'Let it continue to be good for you/Let it turn out well for you'
- c. Ùmù m bià-rà nò-ro-zíé bé nnà m
Children Is come-IND stay-IND-CONT house father Is
'My children came and then stayed in my father's house'
- d. Ó kwè-rè sò-zíé ndí ùkà
3s agree-IND follow-CONT 3pl church
He/She then agreed to be part of the christians'

As can be seen in example (5a) the only participant in the activity, *yá* puts no resistance to the course of action represented by the copula. This action is conceptualised as emanating continuously from this actor participant *yá* and with increasing frequency for sustainability. There is no undergoer in this activity as discussed in Section 1.1.1. This is unlike the examples in (5b-c) where there are two participants in the activities with the actors initiating and sustaining the activities denoted by the verb while the undergoers do not resist these activities which affects them.

2.1.2 *-gidé* Continuous Static

The examples in this section represent continuous static aspect. For examples (6a-d), although the course of action is continuous like that of (5a-d) there is a structure to it that indicates a restraint to the change. For each of (6a-d) there is a subordinate clause which functions to indicate this restraint. In (6a) this subordinate clause is *chí bọ́ọ* 'break of dawn.' As can be deduced, the activity of talking continued but is limited by the break of dawn. Note that there is only one actor participant, *há*, in the main clause. This is also the case in (6c and d) with *Chíké* and *Ó* being the only participants and actors in the main clause respectively. In (6b) there is an actor and an undergoer in the main clause. They are *Múnàchí* and *nwá yá* respectively. Recall the proposition in Section 1.1.1.

- 6 a. Há kwù-gidè-rè ókwú chí bọ́ọ
3pl talk-CONTS-IND talking day break
'They kept talking until the break of dawn'
- b. Múnàchí chọ-gidè-rè nwá yá íké gwú yá
Munachi seek-CONTS-IND child 3s force finish 3s
'Munachi sought her child until she was exhausted'

- c. Chíké jè-gidè-rè ókwú Nnéká lútá yá
Chike walk-CONTS-IND talking Nneka married 3s
'Chike followed up on Nneka and eventually married her'
- d. Ó kù-gidè-rè áká n'úzò áká gbúwé yá mgbú
3s knock-CONTS-IND hand on door hand begin pain 3s painful
'S/he kept knocking on the door until her hands became painful'

2.1.3 –gásíá Pluractional

Aspectual situations depicting multiple events by the actor in a clause is termed pluractional in this study. The morpheme *-gásíá* is a pluractional marker in Ìgbò. A careful look at (7a-d) shows that each of the clause consists of both an actor and an undergoer. This is represented in (7a) where the actor *Únú* is asked to carry out a number of activities affecting the undergoer *íhé*. The example in (7b) has one actor who performs an action that affects three undergoers. The same analysis can be extended to (7c and d).

7. a. Únú mè-gásíá íhé áhù nù
2pl do-PLUR thing DET FOC
'You (pl) do all those things'
- b. Chídimmà bì-gàsì-rì n'Àbá, Legos, n'Ọlọ
Chidimma live-PLUR in Aba, Lagos in Orlu
'Chidimma lived in Aba, Lagos and Orlu'
- c. Dí yá rù-gàsì-rì órú n'Àbá
Husband 3s work-PLUR-IND working in Aba
'Her husband work in many places in Aba'
- d. Nnà há nyè-gàsì-rì há òkè àlà
Father 3PL give-PLUR-IND 3pl share land
'Their father gave them inheritances of land'

2.1.4 –nwù Abilitative

The abilitative aspect in this study are situations in which the actor demonstrates or is able to demonstrate the ability to do something during a period of time. This is usually denoted by the *-nwù* suffix as expressed in (8a-d) below. The constructions in 8a-c include a main and relative clause. This relative clause contains the undergoer in the clause. However, in (8d) there seems to be an adverbial relative clause represented by the word *táá* 'today'. These relative clauses function to give more information about the activity the actor is able to do.

8. a. Chídimmá jè-nwù-rù m' ózì áhù
Chidimma go-ABL-IND 1s message DET
'Chidimma has been able to carry out my instructions'

- b. Dí yá rù-nwù-ru órú á-sì-rì yá rùó
 husband 3s work-ABL-IND working FOC-tell-IND work
 ‘Her husband has done well the job he was asked to do’
- c. Ó gù-nwù-rù ákwúkwó nnà yá zùtá-rà yá
 3s read-ABL-IND book father 3s buy-IND 3s
 ‘He is able to read the book his father bought for him’
- d. Chíké bjà-nwù-rù táá
 Chike marry-ABL-IND today
 ‘Chike has been able to come today’

2.1.5 –ká superlative

In superlative aspect the activity is viewed as being beyond the normal. The morpheme –ká encodes the morphosemantic features that represent this aspect in the examples in (9a-d). Therefore, the function of the –ká morpheme is to indicate the view that the activity has been done in excess. Each of the clause have an actor and undergoer where the undergoer is affected by the extreme actions of the actor.

9. a. Nné yá à píá-ká yá ìtári áhù
 mother 3s FOC flog-SUP 3s whip DET
 ‘His mother overflogged him with that whip’
- b. Í wé-ká íwé màkà égó gí fu-rù èfù
 2s anger-SUP angry because money 2s lose-IND loss
 ‘You were too angered about the money you lost’
- c. Yá nà ényì yá á dí-ká
 2s and friend 2s FOC COP-SUP
 ‘He and his friend are very close’
- d. Ófé nné gí sì-rì à tó-ká
 soup mother 2s cook-IND FOC sweet-SUP
 ‘Your mother’s soup tastes so good’

2.2 Terminative Morphemes

The terminative aspect morphemes in this section encode the view that the activities are fully integrated single events which are space and time bound. The oppositions between each of these morphemes has to do with the timing of the end of the event. In other words, while each event depicted by the perfectivity morphemes comes to an end, the time in which these activities come to an end varies and this variation is morphosemantically encoded by the perfectivity morphemes. The perfectivity morphemes identified for this study are: -gó, -débé, -tù, -chá, and -zù.

2.2.1 *-gó Iamative*

In examples (10a-d) below the *-gó* morpheme attaching to the verb in the clause encodes an expected change of state in the sense that the activity started and lasted for a short while, before coming to an end. In each of (10a-d) the events depicted by the verbs in the clause are short duration events that are expected to terminate eventually. This short duration is morphosemantically encoded in the *-gó* morpheme. The aspectual concept here is termed iamative, a term coined from Latin *iam* ‘already’. It expresses the fact that a transition to a state would take place at some time or not as early as expected.

10. a. Údará áhù à-ká-gó
Udara DET FOC age-IAM
‘The udara has ripened’
- b. Ákwà ọ gbàsà-rà n’ánwú à-kọ-gó
Cloth 3s spread-IND in sun FOC-dry-IAM
‘The cloth she spread in the sun is dry’
- c. Í hù-gó íhé í ná-à-chọ
2s see-IAM thing 2s GEN-FOC-want
‘You have seen what you want’
- d. Há nílẹ̀ à-kwù-gó úgwọ̀ ákwúkwọ̀
3pl all FOC-pay-IAM debt school
‘They have all paid their school fees’

2.2.2. *-débé Cessative*

The *-débé* cessative morpheme expresses the fact that the event has to stop. In other words, the verbs encode the fact that the activities started at some time but has to cease. Therefore, each of the verbs in (11a-d) with the attached *-débé* morpheme has this cessative reading on the whole clause.

1. a. Kà há biá-débé ányí nsó
SUBJ 3pl come-CESS 2pl near
‘Let them stop coming close to us’
- b. Étú áhù kà há sì jè-dèbè ákwúkwọ̀
Way DET SUBJ 3pl follow go-CESS-IND school
‘That is how they stopped schooling’
- c. Sò-débé ónyé ara ahu!
Follow-CESS person mad DET
‘Stop following that mad person!’

- d. Ó kwù-dèbè-rè m̀ nsó
 3s stand-CESS-IND 1s near
 ‘He/she stood a distance from me’

2.2.3 –tù restrictive

The restrictive aspect with the –tù morpheme indicates events that in essence specify their spatiotemporal occurrence. This means that the restrictive aspect shows the specific the space and time limit to which the actor can carry out his activities on the undergoer. In each of (12a-d) the actor performs an action on the undergoer which is depicted by the verb. All the same, this action is limited in scope. The spatiotemporal reading of the example in 12a-d are depicted by the morpheme.

12. a. Chè-tú kà ó biá
 Wait-RESTR SUBJ 3s come
 ‘Wait a little for him to come’
- b. Ényì yá nyè-tù-rù yá áká n’ázúmáhiá
 Friend 3s give-RESTR-IND 3s hand in trading
 ‘His friend gave him a little help in trading’
- c. Jónù bì-tù-rù Àdá áká n’ólú
 John touch-RESTR-IND Ada hand in neck
 ‘John touched Ada a little on the neck’
- d. Nné s̀ anyí wè-tù áká n’ósè áhù
 Mum say 2pl take-RESTR hand in pepper DET
 ‘Mum says we should restrict our use of the pepper (in a cooking context)’

2.2.4 -chá Conclusive

The conclusive –chá morpheme denotes events that can be conceptualised as having come to a close after some time. This implies that another event could follow after that. This is why in (13a-d) there is the main and subordinate clause. The main clause sets the antecedent containing the conclusive aspectual morpheme while the subordinate clause gives additional information about what comes after the close of the antecedent event.

13. a. Há wè-chá í wè-rè
 3pl take-CONCL 2s take-IND
 ‘When they finish taking, you then take’
- b. Kà ó kwù-chà-rà ókwú ó pùò
 SUBJ 3s talk-CONCL-IND talking 3s leave
 ‘When he finished talking he left’

- c. Há zù-chà áhíá há sáá àhú
3pl trade-CONCL market 3pl wash body
'When they finish trading they would have their bath'
- d. Ndí úwé ójii mé-chá gí íhé í má-rá na ùwà siri íké
Police do-CONCL 2s thing 2s know-IND that world tough
'When the police finish dealing with you, you would know the world is tough'

2.2.5 *-zù* *Completive*

The *-zù* completive morpheme on its part indicates aspectual situations that have all their parts put together. In examples (14a-d) the actors' actions are directed towards the coming together of all the parts of the undergoer. The morphosemantic features of the *-zù* morpheme expresses this fact.

14. a. Bíkó mé-zù-ó-ró m égó m
please do-COMPL-IMP-IND 1s money 1s
'Please give me my complete money'
- b. Ónyísí àlà ányí jé-zù-rù ùwà nílé
president 2pl go-COMPL-IND world all
'Our president went completely round the world'
- c. Nnà m gó-zù-rù m íhé nílé m chò-rò
Father 1s buy-COMPL-IND 1s thing al 1s want-IND
'My father bought completely everything I wanted'
- d. Ó kpó-zù-rù ùmunnà há
3s call-COMPL-IND kinsmen 3pl
'He convened all his kinsmen completely.'

2.3 Summary

The focus of this study has been to explore aspectual oppositions outside the four canonical morphemes of aspect identified in Ìgbò grammar. Ten of such morphemes have been identified for this study. In Table 1 below is presented a summary of the morphosemantic features of the aspectual features of these morphemes.

Table 1

Durative morphemes	Terminative morphemes
<i>-zìé</i> 'continuous non-static'	<i>-gó</i> 'iamative'
<i>-gídé</i> 'continuous static'	<i>-débé</i> 'cessative'
<i>-gasia</i> 'pluractional'	<i>-tù</i> 'restrictive'
<i>-nwù</i> 'abilitative'	<i>chá</i> 'conclusive'
<i>-ká</i> 'superlative'	<i>-zùó</i> 'completive'

The durative morphemes semantically encode the conception of continuousness and boundless activities. The aspectual oppositions represented by each of these morphemes is the varied forms of these boundless activities. These have been exemplified in the constructions (6-9) above. The terminativity morphemes on the other hand connote the notion of activities bound by space and time. These are semantically encoded by morphemes as exemplified in (10-14) above.

The identification of these morphemes has been motivated by the postulations in Comrie (1976) and Dahl (1985) where the crosslinguistic study of aspect shows that each language has the prerogative of expressing aspectual oppositions on its own terms.

3.0 Conclusion

This study is not exhaustive in its investigation of aspectual morphemes and oppositions. The study has focused on five varieties of Ìgbò and there is the possibility that other aspectual morphemes and oppositions could be identified in the varieties of Ìgbò not included here. Nevertheless, the study has expanded the scope of aspectual morphemes and given insights to further areas of investigation. For example, the study could be foundational to the investigation of the derivational and inflectional features of Ìgbò aspects, the syntax of telicity and the relationship between lexical (*aktionsart*) and grammatical aspect.

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