ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL-SEMANTICAL ASPECTS OF RADIO DISCOURSE IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

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DOI: ***https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24103398***

Abstract. *The article examines the lexical-semantic organization of English radio discourse through station names, slogans and selected programme fragments. The empirical corpus comprises 30 British and 30 American stations, together with 60 names and 60 official slogans or descriptors fixed as of 8 April 2026. The analysis distinguishes structural form, semantic motivation and communicative function. British naming is characterised by productive sub-brand extension and repertoire-related meanings, whereas American naming relies more heavily on frequency, call-sign and territorial identification. Slogans complement names by specifying content, place, evaluation, time, emotional experience or presenter identity. The findings support the treatment of the name-slogan pair as a nominative-interpretive microtext.*

Keywords: *radio discourse, lexical semantics, radio station name, slogan, onomastics, semantic motivation, British radio, American radio.*

Annotatsiya. *Maqolada ingliz radiodiskursining leksik-semantik tashkil topishi radiokanal nomlari, shiorlar va ayrim dastur fragmentlari asosida tahlil qilinadi. Empirik korpus Buyuk Britaniya va AQSHning 30 tadan stansiyasi, 60 nom va 60 rasmiy shior yoki deskriptordan iborat. Tahlilda struktur shakl, semantik motivatsiya va kommunikativ vazifa farqlandi. Buyuk Britaniya materialida subbrend kengayishi va repertuarga oid ma’nolar, AQSH materialida esa chastota, chaqiruv belgisi hamda hududiy identifikatsiya faolroq namoyon bo‘ldi. Nom-shior juftligi nominativ-interpretativ mikromatn sifatida tavsiflandi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *radiodiskurs, leksik semantika, radiokanal nomi, shior, onomastika, semantik motivatsiya, Buyuk Britaniya radiosi, AQSH radiosi.*

Аннотация. *В статье исследуется лексико-семантическая организация англоязычного радиодискурса на материале названий радиостанций, слоганов и отдельных программных фрагментов. Корпус включает по 30 британских и американских станций, 60 названий и 60 официальных слоганов или дескрипторов. Разграничиваются структурная форма, семантическая мотивация и коммуникативная функция. В британском материале продуктивны расширение суббренда и репертуарные значения, в американском - частота, позывной и территориальная идентификация. Пара «название - слоган» определяется как номинативно-интерпретативный микротекст.*

Ключевые слова: *радиодискурс, лексическая семантика, название радиостанции, слоган, ономастика, семантическая мотивация, британское радио, американское радио.*

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Introduction

Modern radio is no longer restricted to a linear broadcast signal. Live programmes, official replay services, station podcasts and mobile listening platforms preserve the institutional identity of radio while changing the time and mode of reception. This transformation makes lexical choice particularly important: a station name identifies the source, a slogan presents its format and value proposition, and programme vocabulary organizes relations between presenters, guests and audiences. Radio discourse therefore requires a lexical-semantic analysis that combines the meaning of individual units with their institutional and sequential context [1-4].

In media linguistics, radio has been described as an audio-centred form of public communication in which verbal language interacts with voice, music, silence and technical signals [2]. Broadcast talk is not a direct copy of everyday conversation; it is produced for an overhearing mass audience and is shaped by professional roles, programme genres and editorial constraints [3; 4]. N.G. Nesterova further argues that contemporary radio discourse extends beyond the on-air text to its representation on official digital platforms [5]. These approaches justify treating lexical units not as isolated dictionary entries but as components of an institutional communicative event.

Materials and methods

The empirical base consists of 30 radio stations from the United Kingdom and 30 from the United States. For each station, the official name and the slogan or official page descriptor were recorded from official public pages; the list was fixed on 8 April 2026. The corpus therefore contains 60 names and 60 name-slogan pairs. Selected programme transcripts were used only for qualitative contextualization and were not added to the name-frequency counts.

Three analytical levels were distinguished. The structural level identifies the number and type of components, graphic form and alphanumeric organization. The semantic level determines the dominant motivation of the name or slogan: emotional evaluation, institutional identification, time and nostalgia, music and genre, territory, or information and talk. The functional level examines identification, differentiation, audience orientation and memorability. A unit was assigned to one dominant category in quantitative counting, although secondary meanings were retained in qualitative interpretation.

Structural and derivational patterns of radio station names

British names demonstrate several productive onomastic patterns. *Heart*, *Capital* and *KISS* represent lexical-semantic onymization: an existing common word is transferred to a radio institution without affixation, while its evaluative associations remain available. *Smooth Radio*, *Classic FM* and *Greatest Hits Radio* are polylexemic units whose modifiers specify listening mode, musical register or repertoire. *talk*SPORT is graphically integrated but structurally compound, since talk and *sport* remain two full lexical bases. *KISSTORY* is a blend of KISS and *history*, whereas *ALT 98.7* contains a clipped form of *alternative* combined with a frequency indicator [6; 7].

The most productive British pattern is sub-brand extension. *Heart 70s*, *Heart 80s*, *Heart Dance*, *Capital Chill* and *Radio X 90s* preserve the core brand and add a component that narrows the referent by decade, genre or listening mood. Sixteen of the thirty British names (53.3%) belong to this pattern.

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Polylexemic and compound names account for nine cases (30.0%), lexical-semantic onymization for three (10.0%), while initialism and blending are represented by one item each (3.3%).

American station naming is dominated by technical and territorial identification. Sixteen names (53.3%) combine a frequency with a lexical brand or geographical element, as in *Power 105.1*, *REAL 92.3*, *Z100 New York* and *K103 Portland*. Twelve names (40.0%) combine a frequency with a call sign, as in *102.7 KIIS-FM*, *KOST 103.5* and *KFI AM 640*. Two further names (6.7%) use a call sign without a frequency. Numbers and call letters do not function as morphemes; they provide a technical address within the broadcasting system. The lexical component then contributes memorability and semantic positioning.

Semantic motivation of names

Across the sixty names, six dominant semantic fields were identified. Emotional-evaluative motivation is the largest group with 24 items (40.0%), including *Heart*, *Smooth*, *Gold*, *Power*, *REAL*, *KISS* and *Magic*. Institutional-identificational naming comprises 18 items (30.0%) and is markedly uneven: 2 of 30 British names (6.7%) and 16 of 30 American names (53.3%). Time and nostalgia account for nine names (15.0%), all in the British subcorpus, mainly the Heart decade channels, *KISSTORY* and *Radio X 90s*. Musical or genre motivation appears in six names (10.0%), territorial motivation in two (3.3%), and information-talk orientation in one (1.7%).

Structural type and semantic motivation must not be conflated. Heart and Power are both single lexical bases, yet they activate different evaluative domains: intimacy and emotional proximity in the first case, energy and strength in the second. Greatest Hits Radio is structurally polylexemic and semantically repertoire-centred, while 102.7 KIIS-FM is structurally alphanumeric and semantically dependent on its slogan for content and territorial interpretation. The analysis therefore proceeds from form to motivation rather than deriving meaning mechanically from component count.

The lexical-semantic contribution of slogans

Slogans specify meanings that station names leave open. In *Heart - Turn Up The Feel Good*, the abstract emotional associations of the name are strengthened by an imperative invitation. *Capital - The UK’s No.1 Hit Music Station* narrows a broad name through territory, repertoire and superiority. *KFI AM 640 - More Stimulating Talk* supplies a talk format and an evaluative property that are absent from the technical name. *102.7 KIIS-FM - LA’s #1 Hit Music Station & Home of Ryan Seacrest* adds place, content, evaluation and presenter identity to an alphanumeric identifier.

The structural distribution of slogans also reveals a stable preference for compressed nominal expression. Forty of the sixty slogans (66.7%) are nominative-elliptical; nine (15.0%) use coordination or parallelism; four (6.7%) are verbal-descriptive; three (5.0%) enumerate periods; two (3.3%) are imperative; and two (3.3%) are declarative. Nominative constructions present content and value without an explicit finite verb, which makes them concise and suitable for repeated station identification. Coordination is more frequent in the American subcorpus, where territory, music format and presenter identity are often accumulated in one descriptor.

Functionally, slogans encode seven recurrent domains: content and repertoire, territorial identification, evaluation and superiority, emotional experience, time and nostalgia, presenter or

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programme identity, and direct invitation. British slogans more often foreground listening experience and repertoire, for example *Music To Chill To*, *Real music matters* and *The Good Times Sound Like This*. American slogans more frequently combine location with market positioning or a named presenter, as in *The Voice of New York* and *Home of Ryan Seacrest*. These are tendencies of the selected corpus, not universal properties of national radio systems.

Lexical-pragmatic units in programme discourse

Radio vocabulary also acquires meaning through sequential use. Markers such as *actually*, *I mean*, *you know*, *well* and *right* may introduce correction, reformulation, evaluation, topic continuation or response. Their function cannot be determined from dictionary meaning alone. For example, I mean may organize an explanation in an interview, while actually can restrict a previous interpretation. In entertainment formats, evaluative adjectives, idioms, phrasal verbs, direct address and inclusive pronouns help create proximity, but their communicative effect depends on the following response and the presenter’s institutional role.

This contextual principle also prevents an automatic equation between expressive vocabulary and audience effect. A slogan containing best or No.1 expresses a claim of superiority, but it does not constitute independent audience-measurement evidence. Similarly, a humorous idiom or laughter marker may organize entertainment, yet its prosodic strength must be verified in the audio rather than inferred from the transcript alone. Lexical semantics and phonostylistic evidence therefore remain related but analytically distinct.

Conclusion

The lexical-semantic organization of radio discourse is shaped by the interaction of naming, branding, programme format and sequential context. British station names in the corpus favour sub-brand extension and semantically transparent repertoire or mood specification. American names favour frequency, call sign and territorial identification, transferring much of the interpretive burden to slogans. Slogans function as compressed interpretive texts: they identify content, place, value, time, emotional experience or presenter identity. The name-slogan pair can therefore be described as a nominative-interpretive microtext in which identification and interpretation form a single communicative unit. Programme vocabulary confirms the same principle at the interactional level: meaning emerges from lexical choice, speaker position, turn sequence and audio realization rather than from the isolated word.

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