

## Effect of Language on Politics and Communication in the Era of *Change agenda* in Nigeria

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Okwesili Nkwede, <sup>2</sup>Ifeyinwa Nsude and <sup>2</sup>Samuel Nwamini Chukwuemeka

<sup>1</sup>Department of Political Science, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Mass Communication, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria

---

**Abstract:** Language is frequently used as a medium of dominance and social force. Essentially, it has often been used as a political tool hence it plays a significant role in human actions and reactions. The era of change agenda in Nigerian political spectrum has been greeted with various forms of political communication, spoken or written in a language that best illustrate the very essence of such communication. In Nigeria, political discussions, calculations, permutations and alliances are always communicated through language. What brought about “change” as a political slogan communicated to all Nigerians for their absorption and adoption by these political conglomerates saw the emergence of change agenda in Nigerian political milieu. This ideology conceived by these groups of political parties to wrestle for political powers with the incumbent in Nigeria traversed through the length and breadth of the entire country breaching the gospel of change. With the adoption of varying degrees of human communication approach through an effective language of choice to drive the wheel of political consensus to achieve their objectives, certain language of communication was used. This paper therefore, aimed at interrogating the language usage in addressing political situations and other contentious issues as a means of communicating the agenda of change being propagated by the present administration in Nigeria.

**Key words:** Language • Politics • Communication • Change agenda • Nigeria

---

### INTRODUCTION

The history of man is not complete without a functional language used to convey such history from generation to generation; therefore, language is synonymous with man. Application of various languages are the nexus that consolidates cultures, values, ethics, beliefs, opinions, promises, declarations and feelings of groups of people that shares common language. Language of communication in any political era is systematically patterned to reflect the economic, social and political disposition of the intended audience. Supporting this assertion, Aduradola and Chris [1] notes that language cannot only be described as a vehicle of culture or a standard of expressions for thoughts and feelings, but also a system in which every item of communication derives its value from the total context in which it functions. The pattern of language usage, the

system of its dissemination, the communication channel of its circulation, the context of its functions is entirely the products or intention of the sender, its goals and objectives.

Corroborating this view Oduori [2], opines that language is a defining characteristics of man; its communicative value in different contexts often describes the users’ intentions and actions. It is an instrument with which we can imagine, create, aspire, desire and fulfil all that man is capable of. Politics, communication and the language it employed are often interrelated in such a way that the function of one is the implementation of the other. Agreeing to this believes, Oduori [2], again notes that political leaders have a lot of influence on the society and many of their followers and supporters believe in what they say. This is as a result of certain actions arising from some terminologies associated with them and which forms the basis of their political belief that hardly change.

Amidst the language usage and its communication and political acceptability, change agenda was instituted into the sub consciousness of the people as a political culture and mass movement aimed at introducing new political believe in the country.

This is perhaps, why Gulberlet [3] observed that democracy demands an understanding of language not only as communication tool but as a reflection of the symbiotic relationships between polity, culture and identity. Language, communication and politics always have symbiotic relationship. These relationships are reflection of all languages used whenever political gladiators are stocked with ideas that best sell their political manifestos and agenda to the general public. Emphasizing the import of language and the manner with which politicians dramatize and coin it to attract voters empathy, recognition and confidence, Omozuwa & Ezejideaku [4], opines that politicians all over the world embellish their language in inimitable way to give extra effect and force to their message in order to achieve their objectives of winning more votes. They further notes that language can be embodied in rhetoric or propaganda, involving repetition, promise, colloquialism, word coinages, pidginized and figurative expressions to engender trust and win the confidence of the electorates. Against this backdrop, the cardinal objectives of this paper are: to interrogate the language usage in addressing political situations, to analyze the language of ding dung song of change agenda propagated by the current administration in Nigeria.

In doing this, the paper is therefore divided into sections, section one deals with the general introduction and delineation of concepts. Section two dwelt on theoretical frameworks and methodology. Section three capture power of language, politics and communication in the 2015 presidential election in Nigeria, relevance of language and speech presentation during electioneering campaign. Result and discussion is presented in section four, while section five wrapped it up with conclusion and recommendations.

**Delineation of Concepts:** Issues of politics in Nigeria are always a contentious one whenever it is time to elect new leaders for a period of four years. Different political arsenals are deployed by the political gladiators in various languages and through different communication channels in full force to win the electorates' mandate. The intrigues, manipulations, permutations, lies, arm-twisting, evasion and media propagandas of the highest proportions are employed to subdue the opponent. Analyzing the

concept of politics and all that surrounded its practice, George Orwell [5] argued that "all issues are political issues and politics itself is a mass of lies, prevarications, folly, hatred and schizophrenia. When the general atmosphere is bad, language must suffer".

Emphasizing the importance of language in political campaign, Aduradola and Chris [1], avers that the concept of language is a critical resources in all human endeavours especially in political campaigns. Language of political campaign in Nigeria is a combination of certain factors with the intension to influence the electorates to support and accept the political message. That is why Barber [6] in Aduradola and Chris [1], claimed that language enables us to influence one another's behaviours and thereby makes human cooperation possible, it is a vehicle with which human feelings and wishes are expressed. It is also employed to exercise an authority vested in an individual. The vigor with which change agenda was preached and coordinated in Nigeria is exemplified as the first time a democratically elected government was unseated by opposition party in the country.

Going by the tradition of political transitions in Nigeria, where incumbency is difficult to depose by the opposition party, the language of political communication employed by the leadership of the then opposition party must be strategically conceived, nurtured and delivered to the people of Nigeria.

The quantum of political expressions employed by political elites determines to a reasonable extent, their level of attaining their set goal and political end Aduradola and Chris [1]. They further affirmed that every political circumstance is explained and addressed differently by the stakeholders involved using carefully selected words that will justify or validate their particular course of action. The political circumstances that saw the emergence of the opposition party as a winner of an election that was characterized with language of hopes and blames made the Nigeria's fledgling democracy to assume a dimension of reputes.

Political language and communication strategies are used for a purpose and the interest it is meant to protect. That is why Emma and Francis [7], Omozuwa & Ezejideaku [4], Abdullahi-Idiagbon [8] reflects in their specific assertions that political language adopted by political party has a central theme which is to convince the electorates for their support. Emma and Francis [7] bodes that words are used in various forms and styles as political language for the achievement of a specific objective in political communication.

In the words of Omozuwa & Ezejideaku [4], language of political campaign is a variety of language use which intended to pass the needed information to the electorate with a view to convincing or appealing to them for the support of the electorates. It is usually laden with emotion and has the effect of causing the electorate to have a change of mind on an issue. Abdullahi-Idiagbon [8] Language is constructed to champion and promote individual interest. It is carefully and skillfully structured and presented without the awareness of the readers/hearers. Essentially, politicians in Nigeria take advantage of the low level of education of majority of the electorates as well as poverty to manipulate the thinking of the electorates. Taking advantage of low level of education, poverty, lack of exposure of most Nigerians which are invariably on the majority constituted the acceptance and absorption of political language of politicians in Nigeria by the electorates.

**Theoretical Paradigm:** The theory employed in this study is theory of communication. The leading proponent of communications theory is Karl Deutsch. The major assumptions of this theory are that the science of communications and control represent a shift in the centre of interest. The communication theorist claim that it is communication which is the ability to transmit messages and to react to them, that makes organizations. They further assert that it is through communications that a political system relates to and copes with its environment. A system is constantly bombarded with messages and it must be able to read them and react to them, this is the way a system achieves its goals, including self-maintenance.

In this regards, a modern nation-state may be viewed essentially as a decision and control system which relies upon the exchange of messages in both its domestic affairs and its foreign relations. This conception of politics and its emphasis on communication is not surprising when one realizes that its major impetus comes from science of cybernetics.

Contemporaneously, communications approach to the study of politics assumes that the behaviour and survival of political system can best be analyzed in term of communication. The system receives the information, translates and interprets it and then decides how to react. A political system again receives information about how its environment is changing in relative to the system's goals and this is possible through communication.

In realization of the above, communication theory ultimately becomes significant in the present study because it does not however, lie in its concentration on just communication but rather the ability to describe and explain the behaviour of political system that flows from such concentration. Far from the above, it is through communication that input are received and acted upon and outputs are generated by a system. Thus, the effectiveness of a system, how well it handles the demands of it environment, can be measured in terms of its ability to accurately analyze message from the environment and effectively transmit message which express reactions hence, its application in this study.

**Research Methodology:** The study adopted purposive sampling approach to access the effect of political language in speech, its implication on politics and communication in the era of change agenda in Nigeria. A total of nine (9) speeches of the then APC Presidential Candidate President MuhammaduBuhari were drawn from his campaign speeches. These speeches were delivered before 2015 general election in Nigeria and in diaspora. Three (3) sample speeches were finally selected to access pattern of political languages used to determine how such languages were deployment to address numerous challenges facing the country during the period of election and beyond, its implication on politics and communication. The three (3) speeches selected include (1) speech on formal declaration for presidency delivered on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 titled "APC will Rescue Nigeria from PDP Stranglehold". (2) Speech at Chatham House on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 titled "Prospects for Democratic Consolidation in Africa: Nigeria's Transition". (3) Speech after his emergence as the presidential candidate of APC and as a winner of presidential primaries titled "Time to Rebuild Nigeria". The essence of selecting these three speeches is to analyze them and expose those political languages in the selected three speeches that mostly influence the electorate into believing that APC has come to solve most problems bedeviling the country considering the economic, political and social realities on ground.

**Power of Language, Politics and Communication in the 2015 Presidential Election in Nigeria:** Language has become so important and powerful that it cannot be completely ignored in the modern society Nwanne [9]. More so, the power of communication and its relevance in

nations building as captured in Severin and Tankand [10] affirms that the mass media has become a major force in society and it is reasonable to wonder about the effect that this force is producing. Are the effects of mass communication large or small? Are they malevolent or benign? Are they obvious or subtle? The power of media of all types be it electronics, print and social media in electioneering campaign cannot be underestimated.

Observing the functional roles and responsibilities of mass media in any society, Raufie [11] observes that the basic functions of mass media among other things includes, surveillance of the environment, correlation and coordination of facts, persuasion, setting public agenda, transmission of social heritage and opinion molding. This functions are also enshrine in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, section 39 sub-section (1), "Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and receive and impart ideas and information without interference". These constitutional provisions are basically the strength and powers of any media organization in the country.

Expressing the coherent ability of the mass media in terms of good marketing strategy, image laundry and political propaganda in support of political candidate in an election in Nigeria, Nwokefor and Okunoye [12] bodes that the scope of media impact in the coverage of elections in Nigeria from the pre-independence era to the contemporary time has received considerable attention from both political scientists and media scholars.

In addition to the above scenario, politics as an ongoing conversation about social issues, encompass a broad scope of political communication and demonstrate the ubiquity of political communication in contemporary life and in non-electoral periods [13].

Addressing the negative implication of mass media usage to sway the electorates to vote a candidate into political position without proper assessment and valid appraisal of such politician antecedents, Garrett [14] in Nwokefor and Okunoye [12] submits that the current role of media in politics seems intent on misleading the public into a particular way of thinking which is further described as propaganda. He further asserts that in Africa because of high level of illiteracy, mass media are used to manipulate and sway the conscience of the electorates during electioneering campaign.

In 2015 general election in Nigeria, media capacity as factor in deciding the likely winner of the election during the electioneering campaign were deployed in all earnest. The communication pattern during the campaign

exemplified the assertion of Berelson [15] when he noted that "some kinds of communication on some kinds of issues, brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some kinds of conditions have some kinds of effects". The major objective of every communication is to reach the audience and cause the desired effect. That is why feedback mechanism in any communication process is very necessary. The propagators of "*change mantra*" saw the need to initiate some kinds of communication on some kinds of issues (election) brought to the attention of some kinds of people (Nigerians) under some kinds of conditions (poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, insecurity, corruption) have some kinds of effects (acceptance and eventually complied to the tone of the message).

The bias in Nigeria political communication approach tends to negate certain national interest and values and dwelt on issues that are capable of disintegrating the nation. The problem of examining the role of the language in political communications and their effects on national issues such as election campaigns is not restricted to Nigeria only. Anywhere in the world, the press has always been involved in politics, formation of public opinion, perception of images of candidates for political offices, the definition of social reality and social norms, the education, information, enlightenment and entertainment of the public, as well as the presentation and clarification of issues, values, goals and changes in culture and society [16].

Garrett [14] argues that Nigeria media landscape has always been to produce what he referred to as *bumper stickerslogan* such as "change" "change we can believe in". According to the former president, Goodluck Jonathan who said during 2011 general election "during my early school days, I didn't have shoes" "if I can make it to the presidency of Nigeria, you can also make it". These sound bites or slogans emits emotions on the people and make them to identify and empathize with the candidate. There is no doubt arguing whether these emotions as depicted by the candidate on the commercial jingles place on various media of communication would not influence the voting patterns or choice of the electorates.

Accusing the media of structuring voters' perceptions of political realities in any society, Graber [17] in Nwokefor and Okunoye [12] declares that the mass media is responsible for structuring voters' perceptions of political reality because through their reporting capability and ability to reach large audience members of the society, they can considerably influence issues that make up the agenda for any particular election. He concluded

by adding that in view of the power of language in controlling political messages, influencing the political playing field in which an election campaign is conducted and in most instances defines the agenda what would assist a particular party to win an election. However, it is a public domain kind of knowledge that politics has become “mediatized” and that politics in today’s political environment seem to have been knotted with language and mass communication [18].

If voters perceptions about the political candidate can be swayed, manipulated and redirected by the premeditated political communication and slogans that tends to emotionally circumvent the true posture of either the candidates, their political antecedents and politico-economic realities on ground as a result of solvent mediatized political environment, Nigerians are one billion miles away from political freedom.

#### **Relevance of Language, its Effects on Politics and Communication During electioneering Campaign:**

Speakers during electioneering campaign employ relevant languages as a means of political communication. Thereby making it one of the fundamental processes of identifying key personalities involved in any political contests. The effectiveness and importance of language is largely depends on the objective of the parties involved in the process. That is why Vinkram [19] submits that the importance of language depends on how effectively it is able to achieve the objectives. Political speech during electioneering campaign is not peculiar to Nigeria’s political atmosphere alone, which is why Irimiea [20] in Håkansson [21] argues that political speeches have been regarded as a major part of American democracy and they have been so throughout history. History had also demonstrated that in most developing countries of the world that politics and politicking also involves the use of language and political speeches as one of the driving forces that encourage democratic participation and inclusive governance.

Great speeches that moved the people in compliance with objective of the presenter had been presented by political leaders all over the world. Håkansson [21] aptly observed that political speeches are supposed to increase the population’s political participation, help them to understand important issues and how a problem is best solved as well as a way for the politicians to persuade others to have the same opinions as them. Opinions formation, social movements, media and agenda formations is largely the product of speeches and publications made in support of an opinion. Change as a political slogan did not come to Nigerians as surprise,

because elections in the country are always characterized with slogans that emits emotions and tends to have all solutions bedeviling the nation.

The ward “change” was coined and conceived by All Progressive Congress (APC) to oust sixteen years old leadership of People’s Democratic Party (PDP) out of power. Analyzing the damaging effect and negative impact of certain language when employed during political season to persuade and ensure absolute control of the political landscape, Szanto [22] describes the language of politics as a lexicon of conflict and drama, ridicules and criticism, pleading and persuasion, colour and bite infiltrated. A language designed for fearlessness men, destroy some and change the mind of others. The way and manner change agenda of All Progressive Congress (APC) was propagated and sponsored during 2015 general election in Nigeria, demonstrated some element of criticism, persuasion and fearlessness with emotional lading colorations, clothed in a language of hope for the development of all facet of Nigerian economy.

The fundamental purpose that language has evolved to serve is to enable us to make meaning, make sense of the world and of each other [23]. The type of meaning the majority of Nigerians read through the gospel of change was what culminated into institutionalizing the “change mantra” into the sub consciousness of many Nigerians as an alternative to “transformation agenda” of the then leadership of the country.

The language of change as adopted by APC, its implications on the communication patterns and absorption techniques of the language by the poor majority of the electorate has total impact on the political believes of the people. As Nigerianobservernews [24] observes, the APC and PMB campaigned on a change agenda, the change mantra has resonated with citizens especially the poor and excluded because of growing poverty and inequality in the country. The APC cry for “Change” has appeared to sound more loud and clear into the perceptions of greater number of Nigerian than PDP cry for “Continuity” since according to APC change mantra ideology and political manifestos, jobless Nigerians has been promised job, corruption as the bane of Nigeria underdevelopment would be stopped, poor and falling social and physical infrastructure would be restored, widespread insecurity in the North East will be control in two weeks, creation of state police will be advocated and finally, greater transparency in governance would be entrenched, these where promises made by the agent of change during electioneering campaign in 2015 [25].

The change mantra as proclaimed by these apostles and the promise of a new Nigeria supports Okoye [26] assertion, “they promised a new Nigeria of opportunities and hope and the Nigerian people aligned themselves and identified with these agenda, ... the poor majority, especially in the north are waiting for the President, the man of integrity to be sworn in and that he will tackle headlong all the problems and challenges facing them”. Okoye succinctly captured the mode and expectations of the people thus;

Some of them informed me that the regime will pay them N5, 000.00 per month and that they will receive the money for some time and startup businesses. Some of them claimed that they will be fed and clothed by the regime and that they have been waiting for this to happen and have consistently voted for the newly elected President and the forces of darkness have always rigged the election to keep them in perpetual poverty and penury [26]

These expressions of hope and better days to come resonated through the length and breadth of the country to give rise to new political beliefs communicated to them with language of hope. In an intense political environment such as Nigeria’s 2015 general election any language strategies employed by the gladiators were solely to denigrate the opponents to inform or reform the electorate to accept their line of thought. Language mainly serves to form (or deform), inform, reform and transform man and his society all of which are harmonious with the goal of politics, making the two concepts symbiotic [27]. The concept of symbiotic in political language adoption and its acceptability communicated in any political terrain illustrates to a great extent the political development and other indices of human actions and development. This paper attempt to demonstrate a broad appraisal of political language adopted as used by the apostle of change agenda during 2015 general election in Nigeria, its effect on politics and communication.

Technically, speech making and presentation by notable politicians in any political atmosphere has a number of intents or objectives either to increase participation, enlighten the electorate on new approach to governance and other policies and programmes of the government. The speeches usually rest on the discussion and exposure of an issue and, most importantly, the use of persuasive techniques to lure people and solicit for their mandates [20] in Håkansson [21]. Political campaign speech is often characterized and shaped by rhetoric, persuasions, propaganda and slogan. Making speeches

is the way leading politicians convey information and opinions to the people, using channels of communication such as television, radio, newspaper, magazines and even social media to reach their audience. Television has undoubtedly made it easier for the citizens (and other people across the world) to access those speeches and react either in support or against such speech [21].

Audience participation in any political speeches is very vital, most political campaigns in Nigeria are mostly characterized with verbal communication approach in an interpersonal communication arrangement. Political campaigns in Nigeria always hold in an open place where people converge to listen to politicians who are vying for one political position on the other. Nkwede [13] notes that politicians in order to comply with their political commitments and trends of political communication, employ new communication policies and strategies to the extent of setting up modern public information tools such as “infoganda” (information and propaganda) which is always expressed by the use of language.

Håkansson [21] notes that politicians often present themselves as being able to identify with the wants and aspirations of the electorates, their interests and needs of the people. He further argued that they present themselves in that way to be perceived as good politicians that is suitable to lead the nation. The way politicians present themselves in their speeches during electioneering campaign do not give a true picture of their personality, character and traits including their antecedents that do not portray them in good light, rather it is posture of what the audience want to hear at that point in time.

In presenting their speech, they often assume themselves as the only chance the nation has for better future, their audience are swayed to agree with them on the proposed good economic opportunity when they eventually assume the mantle of leadership. When giving speeches, politicians have a tendency of presenting the positive aspects of themselves and the negative aspects of their opponents [28].

**Analysis of Three Selected Speeches Presented by President Mohammadubuhari During 2015 General Election:** One of the beauties of democracy is freedom of expression and rule of law, these core ingredients of democracy has given democratic participation larger latitude to encourage individual participation in a democratic process. The precursors that brought the leading APC to power can be linked to the assertion of Ademilokun [29] who affirms that the place of competition

is at the heart of participatory democracy, thus, the need to outwit or supplant the other is imperative among the political class contesting elective offices.

Ademilokun [29] agrees that politics is one of the realities in our social world. Since language is the creator of the social world, it therefore becomes inevitable for language and politics to be intrinsically linked and as such, language is indeed central to politics. The view of the relationship between language and politics is age-long phenomenon.

According to Fairclough and Fairclough [30] cited in Ademilokun [29] affirms that Aristotle was the earliest person to engage the subject on the relationship of language and politics and his view on the matter is that since human beings are political animals, speech is basically an asset with which they enact their political nature. It is intrinsically clear that politics, language and speech cohabit to engender and give life support to participatory democracy.

**Appeals to Economic Realities:** In the first paragraph of the speech, the economic realities of the country was displayed on the front burner when the speaker first said “Mr. Chairman, if I may pay tribute to Nigerians as a whole who are enduring all sorts of hardships and deprivations on a daily basis, many millions are grappling with extreme poverty and barely eking out a living”. The true pictures of majority of Nigerians were factually presented in this assertion because many Nigerians are truly and barely eking out a living. This emotional statement is considered to be one of such political language that influences the perception of many Nigerians into voting APC into power.

**Appeals to Security of Lives and Properties:** The security of lives and properties of Nigerians were basically articulated in the speech when the following statements were made. “Nearly all are in fear of their lives or safety for themselves and their families due to insurgency by the godless movement called Boko Haram, by marauding murderers in towns and Villages, by kidnappers who have put whole communities to fright and sometimes to flight”. Because of the prevailing security challenges facing the nation at that point in time, especially in the North East and also going by the unimaginable damage the insecurity has caused the nation, people are likely to be motivated by this political language and remarks to throw their weight behind APC.

**Criticizing the PDP:** On this premise, the data reveals that issues like calling the then ruling party PDP names

like “oppressive PDP government” “rigging which PDP Government has practiced since 2003” “Nigeria in my experience has never been so divided, so polarized by an unthinking government hell bent on ruling and stealing forever whatever befalls the country” “all the major indices namely, employment, manufacturing, farming, trading are demonstrably on the decline”. In every democratic contest during electioneering campaign, varying degrees of propaganda are deployed to influence the opinions or actions of other individuals or groups for predetermined ends through psychological manipulation Jacque [31] cited in [1]. These remarks or language employed in this sections of the speech is not only capable of dissuading the electorate from voting the then ruling party but a psychological weapon to manipulate a group of people for a predetermined ends.

**Nigeria Image Laundry and Projection Appeal:** Analysis of this speech shows that not vilifying the country once described as “home of corruption” in the first speech in the eyes of the international community which is detrimental to PMB’s ambition, comments like “when speaking about Nigeria overseas, I normally prefer to be my country’s public relations and marketing officer, extolling her virtues and hoping to attract investments and tourists”. Because of the battered image of the country in the eyes of international community, coupled with some derogatory remarks by some of the world leaders for instance, David Cameron the former Prime Minister of United Kingdom who affirmed that “Nigeria has graduated from being corrupt to a fantastically corrupt nation”. The language of the speech was carefully selected not to further denigrate on the already battered image of the county. This language pattern encouraged mass movement in support of the PMB’s administration.

**Democratic Adoption Appeals in Africa:** Because of the expression that democracy is the best form of governance world over, the data revealed that extolling the virtues of democracy in Africa should be encouraged. Assertions like, “with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, democracy became the dominant and most preferred system of government across the globe”. These political languages are quite thoughtful owing to the fact that it encourages and champions the cause of democracy in Africa. This language added some credibility in the person of PMB as one with unflagging democratic credentials in the continent of Africa.

**Condemnation of Corruption:** The endemic nature of corruption in the country and its negative effects on the economy, politics and social structures of the nation is a source of concern to many well-meaning Nigerians; therefore, the data shows that allowing corruption to thrive is tantamount to encouraging hopelessness and impunity. Some statement such as “in the face of dwindling revenues, a good place to start the repositioning of Nigeria’s economy is to swiftly tackle two ills that have ballooned under the present administration: waste and corruption, corruption will have no place and the corrupt individual will not be appointed into my administration”. Employing these political language demonstrated that one of the cardinal policy statement of the then opposition party is to fight corruption to standstill in Nigeria, this at the long run motivated people to see PMB as the only man capable of dealing with this monster called corruption.

**PMB Image Laundry and Projection Appeal:** “I have heard and read references to me as a former dictator in many respected British newspapers including the well regarded Economist. Let me say without sounding defensive that dictatorship goes with military rule, though some might be less dictatorial than others, I take responsibility for whatever happened under my watch, I cannot change the past, but I can change the present and the future”. The use of this type of language in an attempt to clean an image and personality with such description as “dictatorship” this language pattern was employed by accepting to taking responsibility of his past with the promise of changing both the present and the future if elected is some sought of sound bite to affirm his disposition as a true democrat despite his political antecedents. The import of this data shows that the assurances of a new democratic posture by APC candidate goes into the annals of history to supplant numerous criticism meant to topple the candidature of PMB, projecting him as the best candidate for the presidential election.

**Summary of Findings:** The three speeches analyzed in the cause of this research established that the effect of languages on politics and communication in any political discourse is central to the outcome of the contest. This is because societal disposition in terms of economy of the state, its political structures and social wellbeing of the electorates largely formed the agenda that preoccupies most ideologies of politicians especially in the developing countries of the world. Some of the appeals identified in

the three speeches analyzed, aptly suggest that since the economy of the country is at its sorry state, what any politician would do is to promise a rosy economic future and got Nigerians behind him or her. For instance, almost all the three speeches analyzed had a section or two where promises such as job opportunities, inclusive governance, better accountability, industrialization etc were made. These promises certainly can make many Nigerians change their perceptions about the gladiators, this also deludes them (Nigerians) of the gladiators political antecedents and socio-economic realities in the country.

Media involvement and usage as an arbiter in any political environment demonstrated significant effects on the languages, politics and communication in this era. Mediatization of political process in Nigeria has contributed in psychological conquering/defeat of many Nigerians. For instance, creation of empathy statement, emotional leading voices, bumper sticker slogan, unrealistic jingles, unfounded/unrealistic mission statement and in all, difficult to fulfil promises are media based propaganda with less or no structured plans to see to its reality. Initiating some kinds of communication on some issues (election) brought to the attention of some people (Nigerians) under certain conditions like poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, insecurity, corruption have somegory effects such as acceptance and eventually comply to the tone of the political message. These are built and packaged by political and media experts to sway and manipulate the sub-consciousness of Nigerians through the instrumentality of the media.

## CONCLUSION

Language in any society serves as ingress to development, since it is a vehicle which conveys the identity and culture of the people from one generation to another. Though, political language is an aspect of languages often used by active political players to persuade and influence the electorates to support and champion their political interest. These political languages are employed for various reasons; to educate the electorate on policies and programmes of a political party, to deceive, manipulate, swayed the electorate with propaganda and half-truth information especially in a society like ours where illiteracy is on the rise, to malign and vilify the opposition to attract more votes from the electorate. In communication, certain languages are used by political actors to convey meaning and credibility to information meant for public consumption. Using the



instrumentality of mass media to drive home most of the objectives of any political communication, it become imperative to note that speeches delivered during electioneering campaign is one of the deciding factors that influences the result of the election.

**Recommendations:** Good political expressions should be employed by politicians to avoid heating up the polity by using languages that have unifying factors to avoid violence and destructive tendencies. Politicians should endeavour to deliver more constructive speeches that will extol the virtue and promote honesty and sincerity regarding the achievements made by citizens of Nigeria because everybody in Nigeria is not “fantastically corrupt”.

### REFERENCES

1. Aduradola, R.R. and C.O. Chris, 2013. Language of Political Campaigns and Politics in Nigeria; Canadian Social Science, 9(3): 104-116. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/view/j.css.1923669720130903.9650>.
2. Oduori, R.W., 2002. Language and Politics in Kenya: Restricted and Elaborated Codes. Journal of Language and Linguistics, 1(4).
3. Gulberlet, P.A., 2005. Language and Power: A Resources book for Students. London: Routledge.
4. Omozuwa, V.O. and E.U.C. Ezejideaku, 2007. A Stylistic Analysis of the Language of Political Campaigns in Nigeria: Evidence from the 2007 General Elections, New Journal of Africa Studies. Accessed from [www.ajol.info/index.php/og/article](http://www.ajol.info/index.php/og/article) on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2016.
5. Orwell, George, 1997. “Politics and the English Language” In Kennedy, X.J., D.M. Kennedy and J.E. Aaron (Eds). The Bedford Reader. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford Books, pp: 525-543.
6. Barber, C., 1999. The English Language: A historical Introduction. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
7. Emma, O.O. and O.N. Francis, 2015. Critical Analysis of *Change Is Not Easy* as Political Communication in Nigeria. Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, 3(12): 70-82, Dec. 2015. Accessed from [www.eajournals.org](http://www.eajournals.org) on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2016.
8. Abdullahi-Idiagbon, M.S., 2010. Language Use in Selected Nigeria Presidential Election Campaign Speeches: A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspectives, Journal of Nigeria English Studies Association, 13: 2.
9. Nwanne, B.U., 2016. Media Usage and Abuse in Nigeria’s 2015 Election; Journal of New Media and Mass communication, 46: 26-32, assessed from [www.jiste.org](http://www.jiste.org) on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.
10. Severin, W.J. and J.W. Tankard Jr., 2001. Communication Theories: Methods and Uses in the Mass Media. New York: Longman.
11. Raufie, A., 2003. Mass Media and the Society Issues and Perspectives, Lagos: Meek Associates.
12. Nwokefor, C.U. and A. Okunoye, 2013. Media Power in Election: Evidence of the Role of Agenda-Setting Theory in Political Communication in Nigeria Evolving Democracy. “International Conference on ICT for Africa 2013, February 20-23, Harare, Zimbabwe”.
13. Nkwede, J.O., 2016. Political Communication as an Agenda Building of Government, in J. O. Nkwede and A. Itumo (eds.) Fundamentals of Political Science, Abakaliki: Peace Concept Publishers.
14. Garrett, J., 2010. Role of Media in Politics. Retrieved from [www.comparativepoliticseconomics.com/roleofmedianinpolitice](http://www.comparativepoliticseconomics.com/roleofmedianinpolitice) on June 9, 2011.
15. Berelson, B., 1948. Communication and Public Opinion, in W. Schramm (ed.), Communication in Modern Society. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
16. Rahman, O.O., 1991. Political Communication: Press and Politics in Nigeria’s Second Republic, Africa e-Journal Project @ African Council for Communication Education. Africa Media Review, 5(2).
17. Graber, D.A., 1990. Media Power in Politics. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington, DC.
18. Missing
19. Vikram, C., 2014. Effective Methods of Communication: Importance of Oral Communication in Management, accessed from [www.managementparadise.com](http://www.managementparadise.com) on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.
20. Irimiea, S.A., 2010. Rhetorical and Comparative Study of the Victory Speeches of Barack Obama and Mircea Geoana. Babes Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.
21. Håkansson, J., 2012. The Use of Personal Pronouns in Political Speeches: A comparative study of the pronominal choices of two American presidents: Unpublished article.
22. Szanto, G.H., 1978. Theatre and Propaganda. Austin: University of Texas Press.
23. Djoko, S., 2009. The Language of Political Campaign: Language Circle; Journal of Language and Literature; Vol. III/2.

24. Nigerianobservernews, 2015. Buhari: The Tone, the Body Language. Nigerianobservernews.com, September 26<sup>th</sup> 2015. Accessed from www.nigerianobservernews.com on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.
25. Akpo, E., 2015. 2015 General Elections: Most Odious Presidential Campaign ever. Guardian.ng, 23th March, 2015. Accessed from www.guardian.ng.com on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.
27. Adedimeji, M.A., 2004. Language Functions and Conflict Management in Nigeria: A Functional Linguistic Approach. Paper Presented at the Systemic Functional Linguistics Association of Nigeria. ABU Zaria. 1-8, August.
28. Allen, W., 2006. Australian political discourse: Pronominal choice in campaign speeches. Selected Papers from the 2006 Conference of the Australian Linguistic Society. Accessed from www.espace.library.uq.edu.au/eserv.
29. Ademilokun, 2015. A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of some Newspaper Political Campaign Advertisements for Nigeria's 2015 Elections, A conference paper, assessed from www.inecnigeria.org.
31. Jacque, E., 1965. Propaganda: The formation of men's attitude. New York: Vintage Books.