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Topic: **Aspects of Language Use in Nigerian Political Adverts: A Discursive-Semiotic Study**

Within the last six decades, the wind of democratization blowing across nations in the world has served as a catalyst for the emergence of different strategies to promote political candidates seeking to gain political power. Political messages are processed and executed not only through linguistic facilities (i.e. discourse) alone but also through signs and symbols. For instance, in recent elections in Nigeria, political actors have expanded the scope of discourse strategies in political advertising to elicit support and woo voters.

In this paper, the approaches of *discourse analysis* (e.g. Schiffrin, 1994; Schiffrin, et al, 2001) and aspects of the theory of *Semiotics* (e.g. Eco, 1986; Cook, 1992; Chandler, 2004) provided the theoretical underpinning to describe how Nigerian politicians employed linguistic resources, symbols, photographs and illustrations to convey their political messages and persuade the electorate. The data set used for the study are taken from election campaigns adverts produced and published in national newspapers during the 2003 elections campaigns.

The study shows how Nigerian politicians demonstrated bilingual creativity in the deployment of linguistic resources in political discourse produced in a non-native English community. In addition, it explains how layers of meaning are generated and communicated through signs and symbols, pictures and illustrations. It also discusses how the context in which a text is produced becomes an integral part of the communicative/persuasive properties embedded in the message, and the striking effects that non-linguistic facilities in the text can achieve on the reader/audience.

Tunde Opeibi, PhD teaches English Linguistics in the Department of English, University of Lagos, Nigeria. His research interests are in Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics, Forensic Linguistics, Computational Linguistics, and Political Discourse.

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