

## **Language as an Instrument of Manipulation and Political Control in Nigeria: The 2015 Presidential Election in Perspective**

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**Abstract :** This study is premised on the assumption that language, particularly, English plays a significant role in the acquisition of power in Nigeria. This is against the backdrop of the fact that for the first time in the political history of Nigeria, an opposition party succeeded in dethroning an incumbent President and ruling political party in an election. Therefore the main objective was to investigate the role of language, particularly English in the acquisition of political power in Nigeria. The corpus generated for this study consisted of excerpts from the media exchange between the spokespersons of the two dominant political parties at the time of the elections in 2015; Olisa Metuh of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Lai Mohammed of the All Progressive Party (APC). The excerpts were analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a research tool. The findings revealed the acceptance of the first proposition that English facilitates the acquisition of political power in Nigeria and the rejection of the second proposition that English is an instrument for the exclusion of the populist from political events in Nigeria. The study, therefore, concluded that language, particularly English played a significant role in the acquisition of political power in Nigeria.

**Keywords :** language, power, politics, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

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