Title of Article: *Culture, Media, Technology and Psycho-social Development in Nigeria*. Alaba Simpson & Esther Akinsola (eds). Lagos: Interlingua,

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Date: 2009

Abstract: The paper applies a linguistic theory to study the contents of some confrontational news headlines of Tell, The News and Newswatch magazines (1995-2002) which are considered as a protest strategy that is reactionary to underdevelopment and repressive social system. Here confrontation in discourse functions to expose and confront corrupt public officers and social malaise. Some selected news headlines and lead stories of these three main Nigerian news magazines are analysed in the light of development communication and the growing discontent of the press over the years. The paper applies the Systemic Functional theory to show how the ideational and interpersonal functions of language representing history and experience, relations and identities, unveil the socio-political situation in Nigeria. It also shows that the language of news texts is reflective of social processes and conditions. The paper concludes that confrontations in the discourse of the Nigerian press seek to mobilize collective efforts and mass participation towards national development.