

## Translation Predicaments among Igbo-English Bilinguals

Aleke Matthew

Department of Philosophy, Kogi State University Anyingba

Email: toogood4god@gmail.com

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### Abstract

This paper investigates translation predicaments among the Igbo-English bilingual. The method adopted by the paper is analytic. The paper argued that there is lack of reproducing natural equivalent of the message in the source language into the receptors' language in translation among the Igbo-English bilinguals because of the syntactic, semantic and phonological structural differences between the two languages. The paper highlighted meaning of translation and different kinds of translations, the syntactic, semantic and phonological, structural differences between Igbo and English languages. The paper revealed that Igbo language is the compendium of Igbo cognition. Thus, the structural differences between English and Igbo languages beclouds precision in translation among the Igbo-English bilingual interpretations of Igbo world and projection of outlook to life.

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### Introduction

Language is product of culture. Each word of every language is culturally charged. To adopt a new language is to enter into a new world with its culture, mentality and attitude to life. Person (s) who adopt new language acquires a new mind and comes to understand things in a new way. To replace a language that naturally speaks to a people with foreign one is to replace their thoughts and world with foreign ones. It is on this note, that this paper, investigates translation predicaments among the Igbo-English bilingual who were compelled by circumstances to adopt English language in their interpretations of Igbo world and projection of outlook to life.

### Conceptualizing Translation

The term translation is coined from the Latin root "*translatum*" meaning "carrying across" (Abbot 957). This means that each translation is "fundamentally a carrying over of meaning or message, the decoding of meaning, message and concept from one language and encoding into another" (Nida 483). Crystal notes that "translators aim to produce a text that is as faithful to the original language as circumstances require or permit, and yet reads as if it were written

originally in the target language" (234). Hence, translation has to do with expressing in one language what was said in another language retaining the meaning.

### Kinds of Translation

Jakobson distinguishes three kinds of translation which he explained as follows:

1. Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of same language.
2. Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other languages.
3. Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign system (233)

Of the above mentioned three kinds of translation, the focus of this paper shall be on the interlingual translation or translation proper. We will focus on the interlingual translation because we want to examine the extent to which Igbo-English bilinguals can faithfully and correctly translate into English language their thoughts in native Igbo language especially when it is a thinking on something originally Igbo.

### **The Region Called Igbo**

The archeological study of Igbo ethnic group revealed that *Ndigbo* (Igbo people) “had been living where they are now since 2000 BC” (Hartle 14). The Igbo are the third largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. Nigeria is divided into six Geopolitical zones and *Ala Igbo (Igboland)* as it is popularly called is located at the Southeast geopolitical zone. Igbo ethnic region covers well “over 40,000 square kilometers of the Nigeria's landmass”

(Ikenga-Metu and Ejizu xi). It stretches from the “coastline of the Bight of Benin, and continuing to the outskirts of *Ibibio* and *Efik* territories in the East with its Eastern boundary being formed by the Cross river” (Nnoruka 175). On the Southern and Western sides it “stretches to the border of the *Ijaw*, *Itshekiri*, and other ethnic groups, and then spreads across the Niger to confines of Benin. It narrows in once more, and “extends in wedge-like formation until its utmost Northern limits where it bordered with *Igala* and *Idoma*” (175).

Oral tradition has it that Igbo ethnic group “existed thousands of years before other tribes in Nigeria and has the oldest kingdoms in the country known as *Nri* Kingdom” (Amaegwu 21). Therefore, Igbo ethnic region is “the birth place of many Nigeria's ancient tradition and civilizations and dated perhaps four thousand five hundred years ago” (Isichei 3). *Igbo* region consists of more than “two hundred independent territorial groups, each composed of one or more villages or dispersed residential grouping organized on the basis of patrilineal clans and linages” (Nzirimo 117-118) with over “45 million population and 400/km<sup>2</sup> (1,000/sqmi) density” (Chigere 17). The region is both in land mass and population bigger than many countries in African, Asia, Europe and America such as: Luxemburg, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Seychelles etc. In population, the region is more populated than Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, Ghana, and Cameroun just to mention few.

### **Igbo Language**

The word Igbo “stands for Igbo territory, the language spoken by the people and the domestic

speakers of the language” (Amaegwu 21). R. G. Armstrong study of West African Languages is of the view that Igbo language came from the “*kwa* sub-family of Niger-Congo family of languages” (19). The language has 36 alphabets comprising of 8 vowels *Udaume* and 9 blends *Udamkpi*. The alphabets: *gb*, *ch*, *gh*, *gw*, are *Udamkpi*. *Gb* is different from *g*, and *b*, which are *Mgbachiume*.

The language is based on pitch, vocal inflections, and context when defining the meaning of a word. A single word can have numerous meanings depending on the above factor. For example, the word *Igwe* has six meanings namely: 'iron', 'king/chief', 'crowd' and 'sky' 'grind', 'bicycle'. Meaning in Igbo language gets deeper when spoken with idioms and proverbs which the speaker is not expected to explain except to non-Igbo. The distinctive and many variations of the language make it special with the use of idioms and proverbs. Any Igbo who do not use idioms and proverbs while communicating in Igbo language are considered a novice, unworthy son and daughter among Igbo.

Non Igbo adjudged the language as one of the hardest language to learn because of high and low tones which indicate differences in meaning and grammatical relationships, as well as the same word standing for the speaker and territory. Little wonder Afigbo opined that “the language Igbo has shown itself to be rather chameleon changing its meaning according to time and political climate” (3).

### **To what Extent can Igbo-English Bilinguals Transfer Intact the Original Meaning of Message from Igbo Language to English Language?**

Translation from Igbo into English is an interlingual translation. In Interlingual translation, the message or meaning in the original language is said to be transferred into another linguistic system. Asking to what extent can one transfer intact the original meaning from the source language to another linguistic system? In translation, “the translator first analyze the message of the source language into its simplest and structurally forms, transfer it at this level, and then restructure it to

the level in the receptor language which is most appropriate for the audience which he intends to reach" (Jakobson 23).

Translation, therefore, is essentially a process of transfer of meaning, message or concept from the source language into the receptor language. In such a transfer, most of the translators are more concerned with the receptors of the message in the source language. Some translators with this end in view do a lot interpretation of the original message and their translation becomes their own understanding of the source message. Other translators pay more attention to the nature of original message. They aim at being as faithful as possible to the original message of the source language that they make their translation almost meaningless to the receptors. Little wonder Nida defines translation as "reproducing in the receptor language the *closest natural equivalent* of the message of the source language" (495). I emphasis "closest natural equivalent" in order to make it clear that there is no complete equivalence between the messages as it is contained in the source language and the message as it is restructured and rendered in the receptor language. This view is supported by Jakobson who says that "on the level of interlingua translation, there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code units" (23). The problem of incomplete equivalence is the very nature of translation among Igbo-English bilinguals. The problems are presented as follow:

### **Syntactical Problems**

Syntax is the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language. Each natural language is different from the other in its syntactical structure. There is no grammatical structure that can be said to apply generally to all the languages. English language has syntactical subject-verb-object (SVO), for example: "The girl loves the boy". In English, the position of the word girl and boy are very important for the meaning of the sentence. When the two words are swapped the meaning and the truth value of the sentence is totally changed. "The girl loves the boy" can be true while, "The boy loves the girl" is false. It is the

position of the words that determine the subject and object in English. In the positioning of the noun and adjectives, English in most cases do so in the opposite way.

In English too, verb and its auxiliary go together except where an adverb comes in between them. This is not the same with Igbo and owing to that, Igbo-English bilingual are faced with many problems when translating from Igbo into English due to their syntactic structural differences. For example, English have pronouns which distinguish masculine/ feminine/neuter, while Igbo language makes no gender distinction in its use of pronouns. For the Igbo the pronoun *O* stands for English he, she, and it. In formation of plurals, there is a great difference in syntactic structure between Igbo language and English language.

While English language in most cases form it's plural by changing the endings of singular nouns, Igbo language do so by effecting change at the beginning e.g. boy for boys in English and *okorobia* for *umuokorobia* for Igbo language. In possessive phrases and possessive pronouns, English languages has possessive phrase like; *of, 's, my, your, his, her, our, their*. In Igbo languages, there are no possessive pronouns. The absence of possessive phrases and possessive pronouns does not imply that the speakers of Igbo language lack the concept of possessiveness shown by the positions of the word. Where the English say "Mr. Nweke's house", the Igbo say "*Ulo Mazi Nweke*". To indicate possessiveness it suffices to place the possessed before the possessor. Instead of using the possessive pronoun to indicate possessiveness, the possessed is simply positioned before ordinary pronoun of the possessor. Thus the Igbo say something like "mother you" – *nne gi* instead of "your mother"; "brother we" instead of "our brother" etc. While it is the universal character of all languages to indicate the possessors and the possessed, the sentence structure for doing so differs from language to language. These factors affects complete translation of Igbo idea/thought and experience into English among the Igbo – English bilingual.

In the area of gender agreement of possessive

pronouns, the ordinary pronoun gender differentiation is totally absent in Igbo language. The Igbo sentence “*O na-abia*” for example could mean “He, she or it is coming”. This is because, in Igbo language, the pronoun “*O*” stands for he, she, it. The problem here is that the choice of pronoun while addressing a gathering of mixed genders does not arise in Igbo languages. On the other hand, it raises the problem of ambiguity when pronouns in these languages are to be translated into English language that distinguishes the three genders in its pronouns. For example, to translate the Igbo sentence *Ewerem ya n'oru nkuzi* (I employed him, her, in teaching job) – into English, the translator needs to find out whether the employee is a male or a female so as to choose between *him* (male teacher) and *her* (female teacher). This distinction is not just a trivial linguistic distinction. The connotations that go with words are very important in translation and have deep experiential undertone.

Speaking on the effects of gender distinction on the thinking of the speakers and on the attitude towards reality in different cultures Jakobson write:

In different cultures gender distinctions serves as a basis for a people's whole theology and religious practice: “the fact that the word for Friday is masculine in some Slavic languages and feminine in others is reflected in the folk traditions of the corresponding peoples, which differs in their Friday rituals. In Russia gender distinction is the basis of superstition among the Russians that a “fallen knife presage a male guest and a fallen fork a female one because knife is masculine in Russian language while fork is feminine” (237).

This shows that the phenomenon of gender, though a syntactical factor, transcends mere linguistic domain to influence the people's world view. Such influence is what in most translations either lost or distorted among the Igbo-English bilingual translating thoughts and experiences from the Igbo into English language.

Another syntactic problem in translating from Igbo into English is that of the problem of determiner

phrase. Determiner phrase in Igbo language differs from what is obtained in English language. Igbo language does not have determiners as used in English language in association with common nouns. In Igbo language, there is no particular class of lexical items which is describable as adjective because of its peculiar syntactic position. Nouns and adverbs also “perform adjectival functions in Igbo language” (Mba 8). Any lexeme in Igbo used to pin down the lexical item described, could be called a determiner. With the colonization and ongoing neo-colonization that forced Igbo to adopt English language, there are a lot of translation problems with Igbo use of determiner phrase in translating from Igbo into English.

Chibueze Egbe Aleke's *Contrastive Study of English and Igbo Determiner Phrase* revealed that many Igbo – English bilinguals students find it difficult to translate the correct structure of the following sentences from Igbo into English:

#### **Numbers**

1. Oroma ise – orange five – five oranges
2. Ube abuo – pears two – two pears

#### **Quantifiers**

3. U mu agboghofodu – offspring girls some – some girls
4. Mmadu nile – peoples all – all the people/everybody

#### **Qualifiers**

5. Osikapa di mma – rice beautiful/good – good rice

#### **Demonstratives**

6. Ite ndi ahu – pots those – those pots
7. Mmiri ahu – water that – that water

#### **Genitives**

8. Oroma gi – orange your – your orange
9. Nke ha – own their – their own. (47)

These and other similar determiner phrase structural challenges in translating from Igbo into English often leads to the transfer of Igbo language structure into the English language in most translations among the Igbo-English bilinguals.

### **Semantic Problems**

Semantics deals with the relationship between words and how we construct meaning. It sheds light on how we experience the world and how we understand others and ourselves. One of the semantic problems in translating into Igbo language from English languages bothers on the lack of equal or equivalent structural cognition on the use of the 'verb to be'. To translate the English "it is in the room" into Igbo language, "the translator needs to know whether the pronoun "it" refers to an animate object that is capable of auto-locomotion in which case he has to use the verb *no*, or to any other object in which case he has to use of the verb *di*" (Ewelu 286-287).

Another semantic structural cognition problem among the Igbo-English bilinguals is translating the English "Yes" into Igbo language. The problem arises when question is in negative form, for example, "Haven't you taken your breakfast?" If the above question is addressed to Igbo man, "he would answer in the negative, for in the structure of his language he has to negate the negative question in order to make it positive. Thus, "to answer that he has taken his breakfast he responds "Mba"(no)" (287).

The mathematico – logical rule of double negation yielding an affirmation is tacitly applied here. If he has not eaten breakfast he answers "Ee" (yes) in agreement to the negative question that he has not taken his breakfast for negative + positive is always negative. The Igbo normally don't just say "Ee" (yes) or *mba* (no). They make sentence like: "No (*mba*) I have eaten". Or "Yes (*Ee*) I have not eaten" (287). These kind of semantic structural cognitive disposition are not found in English disposition. The language that naturally speaks to people affects, "to some extent, their cognitive dispositions because each word of every language raises some questions for its speakers with regard

to some grammatical agreements and disagreements" (Jakobson 235).

Semanticists have also identified a type of sense inclusion specific to verb. They call this "troponymy". Troponymy is the "expression of sense of relation inclusion" (Emenajo 302). Inclusion implies "class membership in such a way that the meaning of the more general or genetic terms includes or entails the meaning of the specific term (302)". Example of troponymy in Igbo is, the verb = **Gbu**, 'kill' as in: "Tigbu, to kill by hitting with a club, Kugbu, to kill by hitting with stick, Sigbu, to kill by cooking, Ghegbu, to kill by frying, Degbu, to kill by writing, Dogbu, to kill by dragging, Pigbu, to kill by pressing" (302).

Igbo language is "very rich in troponymy in its verbal system and in ideophones whereas troponymy appears to be limited to 'manner' in English" (300). In Igbo language, troponymy has to include other sense range including "stativity, place, manner and verbal cluster" (300). This kind of structure often times are untranslatable while translating from Igbo language to English due to its lack of semantic equivalents in English language. Semantic problems in translation arise because of the nature of natural languages. Each natural language is different from every other in its semantic structure. Some of these structures are untranslatable. Attempt to translate the untranslatable leads to transgressions, modification, or superimposition of meanings.

### **Phonetic Problems**

Phonetics is the study of sound pattern in language. Put more formally, is the study of the categorical organization of speech sounds in languages: how speech sounds are organized in the mind and used to convey meanings. Sound is of much importance in all languages and phonology is about the speech sounds. Oral speech is based on the system of sound to which meanings are attached. Different vocal sounds carry different meaning for those conversant with a given language. It is in question of phonology that that the divergence of language comes out most

clearly. Immediately a strange language is spoken it registers in the ears of the people around and in most cases many turn around to look at the speaker of “something different”. The range of articulation differs from language to language and it is this range of articulation that is partly responsible for differences in accents by those who replaced the language that naturally speaks to them with the foreign one. The range of articulation in their mother tongue influences their articulation in adopted language. The arrangement of consonants and vowels is an important phonological factor. Igbo language generally does not allow constant clusters (two consonants coming together, e.g. str, br, sp) except in cases where such cluster form just one stop like in *gb*.

This general phenomenon of vowel explains the intrusive vowel ending noticed among Igbo when they speak English that have more consonants than vowel endings. The observation of the intrusive vowel issue here is not that Igbo lack the concept of the word employed. The genetic structure of Igbo organ of speech constitutes great problems in translating from most English words into Igbo. The pronunciation “lazor” for “razor” “lolly” for “lorry” “trolley” for “trolley” for instance by many Igbo as a result of the genetic structure of their organs of speech triggers a meaning difference between the speaker and the audience who are not of the same genetic background. The phonetic expertise of a speaker affects, to a very much extent, the cognitive disposition of his audience or interlocutor because in oral translation, phonetic changes go with semantic change.

### **Standardization Problems**

It is obvious that the literary genre of Igbo language is not at the same level with the English language. Igbo language is full of idioms and metaphors. The translation of such idioms and metaphors into English language is faced with the problem of incomplete equivalence. In translation of idioms and metaphors, what the translator actually does is to “create some sort of equivalent, for there is no real equivalent” (Dagut 23). In such

creation, functional equivalence is aimed at to the detriment of the formal correspondence. In trying to translate those idioms and metaphors Igbo often squeeze in some of the Igbo concepts into the specialized literary genres of English language. Such attempt goes with the deformation of the original message in source language. A literal translation of some Igbo concepts especially their idioms and metaphors are often much obscured in details in the standardized lexicographical renderings given in English language. Let's use the Igbo idiomatic expression of *Onye nna ya no n'eligwe adighi aga oku ala mmuo* for instance. This kind of idiomatic expression has no same level of standardization in English language and any attempt to translate it from Igbo language to its English equivalent will end up in squeezing and deforming the social and psychophysical tags that accompany such expressions in Igbo worldview.

In translating from one language to the other of different standardization “translators are often bound to transform either the normal structure of the receptor language or the original message in the source language” (Allosop 430-431). In most cases both the structure of the receptor language and the original message are transformed. In poetry where the aesthetic aspect of language is concerned, the structure of language and the level of standardization of their literal genres constitute the greatest problem in translation. Unequal standardization in translation of messages from the source language to the receptor language does not only lead to the destruction of the ideological force of the original message, but leads in addition the departure from the force of the original message to another form of message.

### **The Problems of Cultural Element**

Words are born out of the language that forms part of divergent and dynamic culture, and meanings are assigned to words by their users who are members of dynamic and ever developing community. Language constitutes the heart of a culture. Each word of every language is culturally charged. Thus, translators are met with difficulties when translating into the language whose culture

is widely different from that of the language that naturally speaks to them. The translator is faced with the problem of representing to the receptor what is completely outside their experiences. Reporting on the need for accuracy while translating from a language of different culture into another E. A. Nida said that “in translating a text which represents an area of cultural specialization in the source language but not in receptor language, the translator must frequently construct all sorts of descriptive equivalent so as to make intelligible something which is quite foreign to the receptor (*Science of Translation*, 491).

This means that for one to successfully translate from one language of different culture to another, “the translator's attention must be called to the cultural and other environmental elements that influence the meaning a person attaches to a word or sentence, one need to “refer [to] all past stimulation to the learning phase” (Quine 113). Given that language is the brain box of every culture and every language is a system of symbols “culturally conditioned” (Nida *Principles of translation as exemplified by Bible translating* 13). The word used in receptors language goes with certain cultural connotations that are totally absent in words of the source language carrying the message that one wants to translate.

This is because words have their full meaning within the cultural background of the language they form part of. It is for this reason that Heidegger opined that “translation from one language into another not only leads to the destruction of the ideological force of the original word, but leads in addition to the departure from the original ideology to another form of ideology” (Heidegger *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 13). The translation of the Greek philosophical text according to Heidegger, “distorted and bastardized the Greek philosophy and the philosophical import of the original Greek word were lost in words of the receptor language” (13). Each translation succeeds to a certain extent to render the general meaning of the word or the word general sense of the sentence, but there is the cultural aspect of the original word or sentence which is lost in the

translation.

The basic principle of translation is that “no translation in the receptor language can be the exact equivalent of the model in the source language. That is to say, all types of translation involve loss of information” (13). Reacting to the cultural problems in translation Ewelu writes:

.... Igbo word “*Udu*” is one word that carries bundle of positive and impressive meanings and emotions like solidity, originality, fidelity, truth, reliability, trustworthy etc. in addition, this word calls to mind of the Igbo the role of *udu* their traditional music. *Udu* is a traditional Igbo musical instrument that plays the role of holding all the accompanying musical instruments in harmony, determining both the peace and the rhythm. When beholding an object, an event or a performance the Igbo person says: “*Nke a bu udu*”. . . he has said it all in the positive. A volume can be its translation in another language, yet the term *udu* remains non-exhausted and inexhaustible. It is Igbo cultural set up that charges *udu* with meanings. Where a person to translate the word *udu* simply as “pot”, which it could mean in a certain context that would be a terrible translation (292).

This view is however supported by S. B. Oluwole that some concepts such as “family”, “dowry”, and “bride price” do not have the same meaning for Africans as they do for Europeans. The difference according to Oluwole “originates from the cultural tags these concepts have in Africa and Europe respectively” (17). Same is the case with such concept as marriage, parenthood, brotherhood, friendship, etc. these concept differs in meaning for Igbo as they do for English. The distinction comes from the cultural labels these concept have in Igbo and English cultures respectively. The problem of cultural elements in translation among the Igbo-English bilinguals is that of rendering Igbo provincial modes into English.

### **The Problems of Natural Equivalence**

Translators view the meaning of word as that which is transferred from the word in the source

language to its equivalent in the receptor language. Quine for instance alluded to this view when he writes: 'the meaning of a sentence for one language is what it shares with its translation in another language' (Quine, *Pursuit of Truth* 34). Jakobson also shared the same view with Quine. According to him, "the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further alternative sign" (*On Linguistic Aspect of Translation*, 232).

Going by this view, the implication is that for you to understand the meaning of a word, you should look for what the word in source language has in common with its translation in another language. But the pertinent question is: has every word or sentence its complete equivalence in every language? The answer is that there is no objective or real meaning that would be the same in all languages. This view is supported by Ludwig Wittgenstein that "to understand a word or sentence is to understand the language" (199). The reason is simply because words hardly mean exactly the same thing in the original language and with its equivalent in the language of translation. Stating clearly the lack of word or sentence complete equivalence while translating from source language to receptor language Walter Benjamin writes:

The English word "structure", for example, is not coterminous with *la structure* which is its French equivalent. In some case this word means the same thing in both languages, while in other case its meaning in some language differs much from what it means in the other. In some of the cases where the French use the word *structure* the English use "system" as in "systematic problem" whose French equivalent is "*le problem structurel*". The same is the case with the English word "power" and French *le pouvoir*. In most of the cases where the English use the word "power" the French use *la puissance* instead of *le pouvoir* (74).

If the meaning of a word is its translation in another language, what is the meaning of "power" in French? It is not just *le pouvoir*? It is more than that. No word in the source language has an identical meaning with its so-called equivalent in

receptor language. A word is not coextensive with any particular meaning or reference. A word's full semantic force is always larger than any particular reference. Every word has the potential to signify beyond itself" (Benjamin 160-161). A word has varieties of meaning to be determined according to its use within a sentence in a given language and within a language—game or a universe of discuss. It is for this reason that the dictionaries varieties of meaning are given out of which a person chooses according to the context. In translation, some of these varieties of meaning of a word are lost because in every translation there is some change in the context, at least in cultural context.

It is very difficult for a sentence to be transferred from one language to the other without loss of information. Information is lost in translation because the circumstances within which words are used in the source language are in most cases not taken care of in translators' effort to render the message meaningful to the receptor in receptor language. Translation does not convey all the emotional, psychological and social tags that go with the word in the source language. For example, the French word "*Bonsoir*" is translated into the English as "Good evening". Should a French man come into an English country and begin to use "Good evening" the way *Bonsoir* is used among the French he will in many cases embarrass his addressees. The reason is that French greets *Bonsoir* in meeting a person and as well in parting company in the evening, while the English greet "Good evening" only in meeting and not in parting company.

Words are "not just paper bags or containers of meanings or messages that can easily be removed from one container into another without any deformation of the content" (Ewelu 300). The meaning of a sentence is more than what the sentence in the source language shares with its translation in another language because its meaning is never fully shared and, as such, can never be fully translated. This is not to say that a reasonable accepted translation is not possible. Translation is the fact of our interpersonal and international relations and we come to understand

one another to a great extent by its means. The problems of incomplete equivalence, of loss of information and of untranslatable only undermine the importance of the original source and the need to consult it from time to time so as to avoid a situation where the original message is gradually departed from by series of translations and of translations, thus making the original message completely unknown. It is in the original language that the original message is guarded intact.

### **Conclusion**

It is in people's natural language that their thought is formed. The language that naturally speaks to people gives meaning to their thought. Man is the bearer of his language because he is the bearer of his thought. In order to communicate his thoughts, he uses words or signs to represent and communicate ideas. In language therefore, man represents the objects of his ideas using words and signs that symbolize the objects, hence it is only understood by those who know and understand the meaning of these words and signs.

These are sensible words and signs he developed as substitutes for concepts. These words and signs derive their meaning from both the language situation and the context of the sentence. Therefore, each word and sign of every language is culturally charged. Arising from colonization and ongoing neo-colonization that forced English language on Igbo academics, on stepping into the school; Igbo are snatched away from the cultural language with which Igbo thought is formed and experiences built and catapulted to the "heights" of English language. On attaining the heights of this foreign language, they discover that there are foreigners to it. Here, two alternatives are open to them:

they may choose to sail along with the foreign language and the cultural identity crises that go with it; or they choose to discover their identity as Igbo. If the latter is their choice, they are still confronted with another problem. They see no equilibrium between their English language and Igbo worldview. In effort to evaluate Igbo world and project outlook to life, they fall back to myths

and superstitions, because their language of cognition cannot precisely analyze Igbo background and experiences. This state of affairs is schizophrenic and has left many Igbo-English bilingual neophytes and mimics when it comes to analyzing Igbo world and projection of outlook to life.

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