

ALIENATING THE 'OWN-NESS' GRAMMAR: IMPLICATIONS FOR AN IGBO PHILOSOPHICAL WORLD-HOOD

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Abstract

*Philosophy knows that one of the earliest problems that occupied Aristotle's quest for the knowledge and the definition of 'man as man' was his use-instrumentalism of his own-ness language. Aristotle did not search for the definition of the Greek language that was his own-ness language only but rather noted that any given human language stands as his authentic definition and identity. Aristotle therefore defined man as the 'being that uses language as a tool' (homo logon ergon). This work therefore is a query on all mankind who use language. The query is: Which language do you use as your instrument/instruments to power your philosophy works that is to ask: Your own-ness language and/or other languages? The little worry of this paper is to establish the fact that every given human language serves as the 'tool of tools' in all and for all that is human existential work-encounter in nature and philosophy and as such Igbo language must not be excluded in this mission. This paper pulls up also the Hegelian concept and theory of the 'Universal Ground' which is 'grammar' as that 'substratum' in all and for existing human languages through which every focus, locus, search and research for all that is human knowledge is guaranteed and made possible. Based on the above direction, this paper presents before us all as African/Igbo teachers of philosophy and our teaching engagements with the question: Which language or languages stands/stand for use as our/your *instumentum laboris*? The answer to the above question will define the philosophical contents, directions and implications on the 'own-ness language/grammar vis-à-vis the implicit conflicts with the 'use-gears' of any colonially imposed language and grammar.*

Keywords: Igbo, Philosophy, World-hood, Own-ness, Alienating Grammar

Introducing the Little Worry: Alienating Grammar

It has generally become an anxious mix-feeling of all kinds with some accents of resentments across 'Ndi Igbo' that the Igbo language is on the gradual process of

death or extinction. It is already a popular noted declaration, according to UNESCO reports, that the Igbo language is among many other world languages that have the maximum life-span of fifty years to go into extinction.

On considering the matters of alienation as such, there are also very dangerous and negative feelings that go along with this concept:

Issues like the characters of incongruousness, estrangements like racial exclusion and unnaturalness, conflicting feelings of prevailing foreignness and uselessness, hostile contradictions, estranged rejections/transfers of essential germaneness in/of language/linguistic ownerships etc. have bedeviled the language use-implications and consequences among the colonized and the imposed language/languages thereof.

This short paper feels very strong that as a matter of urgency, the Igbo language and grammar are endangered and are becoming victims in/of alienations.

A simple but general question on the Igbo face is all about how the Igbo nation has been indifferent and more so, most unfriendly to their natural 'own-ness language and grammar' in spite of the fact that there are other general worldwide acclamations that 'Ndi Igbo' as a tribe and people within the African continent are recognized as one of the most intelligent and widely educated race. Igbo language is becoming estranged and massively withdrawing from the Igbo palate and palace as their '*modus loquendi* and/or *vivendi*'.

The Igbo language is unfortunately gaining across the Igbo nation, within the 'feelings of use', a conscious and noticeable 'use-drop' with a massively gainful transfer of their cultural outfits and ownerships, by the ways and means of a dominant language shift through the English language colonialisms. The issue here is that the Igbo language is daily becoming 'alien' in its nationhood whereby 'Ndi Igbo' are consciously and massively turning their linguistic allegiance to an aggressively dominant English colonial language and world-hood.

Every language within its domain of 'use' remains and maintains the portraiture of both the necessity and consciousness of what this paper calls a 'sense-certainty' which on its own accords signifies the 'own-ness' means of self-actualization, self-understanding, self-development, republican-ness and hard work. Language remains, all in all, the definite analytic employer of self-determination as human person and remains and stands out as the accountant-general of the indices for the 'own-ness- power-houses' for the systems of knowledge-creations, -internalities and -storages.

It is the language of 'use' that fundamentally has the rights of and for the declarations of both the collective and subjective objectives of experience of the user/users and at the same time this same language throws open the challenges of doubts in search of and for the determinate demands of explicit and implicit social demonstrations of knowledge-creation as well as truth-conditions.

Every human language can be called the conduit-conductor for the contents of wisdom and remains as that necessity through which the instrumentalities of the given language/linguistics logical structures conversely produce and own-up the inherent universal grounds that philosophy notes as 'grammar'.

The trust of this short paper is on the facts about the appropriations of the contents and uses of grammar and the implications while in disuse.

The simple question this paper is hereby asking is if an 'own-ness' philosophy, like Igbo philosophy, is possible when the 'own-ness Igbo grammar' of the same language becomes necromantic within the process and doing of any claims of Igbo philosophy.

On this note, this paper has, as a directive query/inquiry on philosophers who have expressed their positions on and about the use of language and their applicable grammars. This paper wishes to start with the Hegelian fronting of the concept of the universal grammar and its definition.

Hegel

Hegel reflected intensively on grammar as the major springboard for his most consequent argument for the use, indigenization and appropriation of language as the strongest clue for language applications, appreciations and appropriations.

This paper, presents first and foremost the Hegelian path through which he reveals grammar as the general fundamental framework of/for the development for any given dialectics of/for doing philosophy which along the ages of developments stand as the science of all sciences.

From the above Hegelian position, grammar belongs to the categories and characteristic products of understanding and thought. For Hegel, grammar stands as the 'universal ground' and forms the determinate clue for thought that must implicitly also find its expression in and through the given and present-at-hand *own-ness* human natural language (W. 4, p. 322), like in our case in point *Igbo language*.

For Hegel, it is the grammar that one uses in all possible thought-systems and the processes that creates an *own-ness home* within the thinker and also forces the thinking subject into the double processes of the perpetual sub-summation of the universal ground (grammar) that is in *use* and also the particularization of the universal ground (grammar) for the guarantee and negotiation of an *own-ness philosophy* that has to stand out as the science of all possible sciences in the hands of the thinker. (W.4, p. 323) surety

For Hegel in this case, it is compulsorily necessary to keep in view the significance of the parts of speech (language-grammar) that invariably determine understanding and thought while the said ‘thought and understanding proceeds’ must be aided by the rules of the ‘own-ness’ language and linguistic combinations. (W 4, p. 323)

One of the outstanding issues that Hegel during his time so much celebrated was the decline of Greek and Latin as the sole universal voices of and for philosophy and education that as of that time had the colonial resonances and romances as the central voice of the sciences in Germany. (W4, p.315)

On the grounds of the impositions of Greek and Latin on the German language, Hegel expressed the implications of the alienation of his ‘own-ness’ German language and grammar as follows and said:

The intimacy with which our language (German) belongs to us (Germans) is lacking in the subjects we (Germans) possess only in a foreign one; these are separated from us by a partition that prevents them from truly finding a home in ... (German) minds. (W 4, p.315)

The above crisis made Vernon (Hegel’s Philosophy of language, (W p.38-9) to say that genuine knowledge can only be intimately grasped by students if it is expressed in their natural tongue (mother tongue) which this paper calls the ‘own-ness-language and grammar’. It is the position of Hegel that a foreign/colonial imposed language cannot truly find a home in the minds of the colonized.

From the above Hegelian perspective, a use of a ‘non-own-ness language and grammar’ which is not the own-ness ‘universal voice’ of a people stands to be noted as *obsolete* and cannot aid the processes of an ‘own-ness’ philosophy and logic. (W 4, p.315).

Further in the views of Hegel, any form of alienation of the ‘own-ness’ grammar and language is a code of conduct that *separates us from ourselves* (W 4, p. 321) and enacts estrangement. (W 4, p322)

To summarize this point in perspective, Vernon (2007,p, 43, cf..W. 4 pp.322-23).) says again that:

In short, grammatical study constitutes the beginning of logical (philosophical) education by teaching us to discover and apply the pure forms of determinate thinking, and thus can be considered elementary philosophy in that it makes us confront the perpetual subsumption and concretion of universals and particulars in which the form of reason’s activity exists.

The above statement substantiates the fact that the grammar of any given language dictates the existential applicability’s ‘knowledge-thought-foundations’ based on and powered by its use-gears.

Grammar and the Own-ness World in Wittgenstein and Heidegger

The philosophy of language has so much in the modern times identified the world of the human *Being-ness* as based on the instrumental uses of language as the most important existential tool. Two major philosophers, Wittgenstein and Heidegger, for example, have expressed their philosophies from the contents of the inseparability of *human Language and the human world as the one necessity* for the obvious definitions of man-as-man-existentialism.

Wittgenstein has been credited to have said that ‘the limit of my language is the limit of my world’, and Heidegger on the other hand states that ‘only where there is language, is there world’. In view of the above position, we can say with Wittgenstein that where Igbo language or English language there exists an Igbo world or an English world and/or both.

On the other hand, we have noted above that language is grammar and grammar is language. Based on the above factors, it is also firmly applicable on the level-side of syllogism, that since grammar is the universal ground of/for all natural human languages, and that no language can exist without grammar, and also that grammar itself is that universal ground of/for all natural human languages, this same grammar therefore must remain actively in use to maintain man’s existentialism and his world as well as the declarations and definitions of man’s existence in a *life-form* that is designed through grammaticality.

Conversely, the alienation of a language (as grammar) means the alienation of the world of the alienated language and grammar. To put the above dichotomies in perspective, this paper will make very short inferences from the dictations of the above cited philosophers.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Wittgenstein informs us that working or doing philosophy means working on or doing your language/linguistic own-ness identity for purpose of the expressivities of yourself-hood and world-hood. (CV, p.16)

The content of the above short expression is like saying that the English man can only produce an English philosophy through the instrumentality of his English language-world-hood- identity and that the same is expected to stand applicable in/to any claims of doing e.g. ‘an Igbo philosophy’.

By this terrible implication, this paper cannot claim an Igbo identity based on the ground that this work is basically an English-grammar-identity-work. This may be the very reason why Wittgenstein conceives philosophy as a therapy and that the essence of this therapy is not to see philosophy as a way of life but rather it is the way of seeing the own-ness life (eg. my Igbo-ness life) as philosophy. To consolidate this assertion, Wittgenstein says:

The sickness of a time is cured by an alteration in the mode of life of human beings, and it was possible for the sickness of philosophical problems to get cured only through a changed mode of thought and life, not a medicine invented by an individual. (RFM,57)

The application of the above citation is that this philosophical alienation through the modes of English grammar can only get cured by the Igbo philosopher’s personal mode that takes essence in/through the Igbo language and grammar. From the cited work above, it is only the work-use with Igbo language that can cure the Igbo claimant-philosopher of his/her *English-sickness* coursed by the language/linguistic colonially enforced modes of change in thinking, reading, writing and expressing philosophy. This application can stand as the only medicine that can cure the Igbo of their alienations of their own-ness language/linguistic philosophical identities and grammaticality.

A close study of Wittgenstein’s works will always point towards a general understanding of philosophy of language as the expression that ‘language remains the mirror of nature while propositions through language present the pictures of the world of the language-user. This application on the other side of

the same coin brings back Wittgenstein's declaration, as has been presented above, that: the limit of my language is the limit of my world. (Tractatus 5.6) This statement is by all implications equal to saying that our doing any philosophy that is powered by our use of English stands designate of/for the English-worldhood and grammaticality.

The above statement indicates also that the world in which one linguistically exists, works, lives and let live, is implicitly the world of one's language use and its grammar. This statement is strong enough to state further that the language I use is there and applicable/apply-able as my world-organizer, world-experience, world-expresser and world-delineator.

Consequently, the world in which I exist is my world made possible through the language that I use. This world that is mine is not a world of a geographic demarcation but is a world that is possible through the logic that is made manifest through the language I use. It is this logic, according to Wittgenstein that pervades my world and limits it. (Tractatus 5.61 and 5.62)

In the words of Sefle (Language and the world, p.188-9 *cf. Tractatus 5.4711*)) therefore we note as follows:

Language and the world are two sides of one and the same reality. The world I know is known inseparably from the language I use. One cannot split the two and discuss them in isolation without some literal misrepresentation... An investigation of the structure of language is at the same time an investigation of the formal aspect of the world. To give the essence of propositions means to give the essence of all description, therefore the essence of the world.

Based on the above position, the question that we need to answer is whether your own-ness language is in tandem with your own-ness world.

The own-ness Language-world in Martin Heidegger

Sefler (1974) in his work, *Language and the World* (cover page) cited Martin Heidegger's work *Hoelderlin and his Essence of Poetry* and made it clear that it is an impossible and an unthinkable task to separate language and its world. In his words he noted that it is *only where there is language, is there world*. This statement stands as proof for the most common human content that we are all identified with our 'own-ness language and world' which normally flows out of the commonest expressions like: I am Igbo, I am English, I am French etc. This recalls

the fact presented by Wittgenstein above that *the limit of my language is the limit of my world*.

In the philosophy of Heidegger therefore we can submit that language is all about the own-ness world that creates the totality-matrixes for the relationship in human-being-ness and between the self and the world which Heidegger describes and calls the *ready-at-hand* and the *ready-to-hand*.

Speaking about human language and the world of the language user, Heidegger describes the relationship of language and its world as the discovery of *a totality of involvement that lurks an ontological relationship of the language-user and his world* (BT,p. 118).

For Heidegger, language as man's own-ness world is man's ready-to-hand equip-mentality that encompasses man's structural arrangements and agreements for the dispositions and presentations of possibilities of man in his world-hood encounters for the designs of man's primary employments, involvements and assignments in his world and hood.

Heidegger presents human language as the *totality-matrix* wherein the phenomenon called world is factored, conceptualized and contextualized and by ways and means of this constitution, all languages become so characterized to gain their world-hood definitiveness and names e.g. Igbo, English, French etc.

On the above note therefore, the spatial and physical localization of the world becomes a relational space for Dasein's explications and manipulations as mere linguistic and language referential spaces and ontological designations.

Based on the above facts, language becomes Dasein's project and projection for Dasein's intelligibility and mode of being-in-the-world, signification of the own-ness being-in- a-world and the being-of others in their worlds and entities also. (BT, p.143,)

Magda King substantiates the above premise while reflecting on Heidegger's philosophy and states as follows:

The world is not a thing, but man himself is worldish: he is, at the bottom of his being, world-disclosing, world-forming. Man alone is so, that he fore-goingly, a priori, understands his own being in a relational-whole, in which and from which he can meet other beings and understand them in their being. (Magda, p. 73).

Grammar: The Agenda-Setting for the Construction of the World of Philosophy

Based on the issues arising from the philosophical approaches of some of the founding fathers of philosophy of language as presented above, it is clear that knowledge as claimed by humanity, can only be understood, powered and thereabout gain further transmissions by the instrumental assignments of language through grammar which substantially becomes the human social convention, assignment and engagement in relational affiliations with the said language/languages homepages.

It is also an undisputable fact that all humans are totally ensnared in an inescapable ‘world-hood-web’ commonly known as language. On the above issue, it is also an undisputable fact that what we know within the human world and human-hood, encompassing nations, races, tribes etc. is all powered and made known and possible, by the ways and means of what is called the *tongue-tied-web* and *unifying force* known and called language/grammar.

All natural human languages and their grammars are mere common human agenda-setting made possible through the given semantic spaces as provided within the language and linguistic grammaticality’s tangible evolutions.

It is also a given fact that through the language and linguistic grammaticality’s tangibility and evolutions, all languages gain their given environ-mentalities and human conditionality ties (*Conditio Humana*). Language is therefore Dasein’s assignment, as Heidegger stipulates and also Dasein’s uniqueness and species-specific environ-mental evolutionary comport-mentality. On account of the above, we can understand the work of J.L. Austin (1952) called *How to do Things with Words*.

Based on the above factors, Obuasi (2011) submits that all human languages have in common three summative natural functions/qualifications as their absolute inalienable unitary systemic significations for the language owner’s reliance, social integration, values consciousness, philosophy, education, sociology, anthropology etc.

To this effect, language and its inherent grammar signify the owner’s humanity and knowledge species-specifically.

Obuasi argues therefore that all languages function as instruments of thought, instrument of communication and instrument of social identity.

Based on the above tripartite functions of every human natural language, Okonkwo (2014, p.133) adds that:

1. Every human natural language has the natural content and capacity to lay bare the world of its natural speech community and is expected to function as their constitutive *modus operandi* for the disclosures and significations of their thought phenomena which stand also as the identity for their 'own-ness philosophy'. On the ground of the above submission, it is easy to deduce the truth that every education, philosophy and learning processes are thought-dependent-layouts drawn from memories, words, concepts, references, and cultural-baggage-constitutions gained and drawn from the own-ness languages.
2. All human natural languages serve as the instrument per excellence for the social affairs of mutual communications and shares of social affairs for the formations of symbolic-forms of all sorts like: oral-medial artistic expressive codes for the transmissions of heritages, skills, values etc.
3. All human natural languages function as the instrument for social identity and identification. The 'own-ness language' functions as an integral/inherent socio-structural sigma and blue-print for the signification of the human *locus-standi* in/for the environ-mental matrixes that underpin their human geography, background, region, world and worldview etc.

Okonkwo (2014, p.131) further states that all human languages exercise and appropriate the congruencies of what he calls the **Language-Power-Pedagogy** (LPP) for the consolidation of their values, and the theories of *equal validity of all human languages* especially in the construction/creation of knowledge and philosophy' (Okonkwo,2014, p.133).

This paper can not overlook the 1980 UNESCO project on the World Languages published by S. MacBride: *Many Voices One World: Communication and Society Today and Tomorrow*. This project is all about the declaration that all human languages are equal. The trouble becomes unveiled when the question is: **What do you do with your own-ness language?** An Igbo proverb says that: *The onye kporo nwankita ya ka oga aza* (It is the name you give your dog that it will answer/responds to).

To clarify the above positions of UNESCO on the issues and matters of *Equal Validity*, Boghossian (2007) and Feyerabend (1993) summarily asserted that the claims of the ‘first world sciences’ are mere hangover of the colonial false claims and complexes of superiorities. Okonkwo (2014, p. 134) proposed five factors for the guarantees and foundations of the *Equal Validity* declarations as follows:

1. *Every human language has ‘Form’*

The form of any given language stems from the possibilities of its use of speech sounds and the uniqueness of the speech patterns. The speech sound systems and patterns function as mailboxes, pictures and mirrors through which the own-ness language-propositions flow in, out and through the given own-ness world lived out of the worldviews of the own-ness speech communal hermeneutics which Wittgenstein acknowledges as *Form of Life or Life Form*. (cf. Kishik, 2008)

2. *Every human language has ‘Grammar’*

The little worry of this paper is grammar which stands as the definitive content, commander, lawyer, soul and essence of any given language. As already expressed in Hegel’s input above, grammar provides the universal ground on which all human languages must stand and build its linguistic contents and philosophies.

Language builds its community and society on the use of grammar as a general language/linguistic law and therefore *ubi societas ibi jus* (where there is society there is law i.e. the law made possible and instrumental by language use) (Okonkwo, 2007). This very fact made Wittgenstein (Okonkwo 2009) to propose another name for grammar which he calls *rule-following in language game*.

On the above note, Kishik (2008, p. 80) confirms that:

If you follow certain rules, then you play in the community of those who also play the same language-game, who share the same world that you inhabit. If you do not play according to certain rules, then you simply do not communicate with those who do follow the rules, you lack this common ground (universal ground) with them, and remain, to this particular extent, in a state of infancy.

The above quotation projects the curses and fates of/about the alienation of the own-ness language and grammar.

Every human language commands, through the ‘rule-following’ the possessive power with its inherent paradigmatic commanding force that are interwoven with the social and communal fabrics of their life and world. Base on such fundamental forces of language and its grammar, the use of any given human language platform becomes the unassailable commander of the implicatures of the definitions of the LPP as presented above. If we understand the above fact, we may state that the alienation of one’s own-ness grammar reduces their claims of doing an own-ness philosophy as such and therefore the claim of an existent philosophical work-force in that alienated language/grammar stands reducible to a dysfunctional statehood and infancy.

3. *Every human language has picture*

One of the greatest catharses in the philosophy of Wittgenstein is the ‘picture theory of language’. For Wittgenstein (TLP, 4:112), every human language is an album that contains the pictures of realities, fact of the world and the world-hood of the users.

The above statement underscores the fact that all human languages define and design the pictorial landscapes of the language users’ objective communicability and mutuality in knowledge stances. Therefore, as Okonkwo (2014, p.135) says, the use and importation of a non-own-ness language (e.g. English colonial language for/from the English) stand as the implicit medium of/for importation and use of epitaphs, epigraphs, traditions, heritages etc. of the English language sources and ownerships.

It is therefore impossible for the English language (a colonially imposed language in the case of this paper), to conform, transform, transplant, and translate implicitly the stands and codes of the philosophies of Igbo worlds of idioms, proverbs, anecdotes, aphorisms etc (Okonkwo, 2017) and successfully guarantee such a claimed philosophy for the *credo* of an Igbo philosophy. *It is an old dictum that translators are traitors.*

4. *Every human language has meaning*

One of the major functions of language is the creation of meaning that is excised as the nexus between the inseparable inter-fluxes and the processes of *giving sense and essence* to the hidden social, community and communal knowledge transfers and interpretations. Meaning is the tandem expressivity of contexts and practicalities of the life of the language players and interlocutors. The question at this point is: How can an Igbo word stand in

tandem-expressivity and guarantee same meaning within an English claim as interlocution without the use of translation and transliteration?

5. *Every human language has world*

This paper has made several references about the content of language and its world and the incumbent/ implicit world-hood as proof of their oneness-own-ness and inseparable stress-applications. Every spoken language is by its nature the clue to the world of the user. This is to say that the language you use is the world 'lived-out' by that very speaker-user.

Based on the above platform, this paper recalls the power-package (LPP) (Okonkwo, 2014) of every language and its own-ness world which the children's literature of 1871 called *Alice in Wonderland* addressed. In this literature, Humpty Dumpty informed the little Alice that *the one who controls the 'word' (language) has the power to name the world*. Humpty Dumpty teaches that an ideal communication is only possible and limited by the shared language world and its determinate world structural limits.

All human languages/linguistics/lexical logicalities exist because of their given human language-world and are powered through their composed words- sententiousness and thus they create shared subjectivities, objectivities and *use* as clues for their necessary social drives made possible through their own-ness language-world's naturalness and expressivities.

From the above effect, every human language, because of its imbued own-ness habitual world-hood, own-ness use-immediacy and use-inherence, must implicitly project its purest self-identity and its own-ness *worldish*-otherness along with its distinctive-uniqueness-other-ness within the penumbra or assembly of all other world human languages and therefore one language one world.

On account of the above reasons therefore, every human language is uniquely an enduring artifact of the culture and world of the people who own and use the language even when that same language may have been (colonially) transferred across its habitual domain and geography and this can be said to be the plight of the Igbo language.

The truth of the fact here is therefore, that all languages are equal, valid and appealing to all the human 'use-need' for knowledge creation. The fact about factoring colonial languages as superior languages, while subjugating the sovereign language/languages of the native dwellers as unqualified for all

knowledge creation, including philosophy, stands as **false claim**. And on the other hand, when the native peoples make their own-ness languages useless for knowledge creation, then such a mental state and derailment become their self-destructive project and gear-boxes for the self-destruction of their tool-boxes for knowledge creations, language world, language/ linguistic cultural ingenuities, self-hood and self-identity. This can be called in this case, the self-made destiny towards their own-ness language death.

Colonialism and Colonial Language: The Art of Enslavement

The European Voice: Hegel

The basic fact about the imposition of a colonial language on an indigenous (native) domesticated natural own-ness language and the willful colonial domestication of this same colonial outfit in their colonies is equal to an imposition of power with the effect of sending the native language into a linguistic exile, linguistic enslavement and the resultant process of a gradual linguistic/language death. This can also be called a calculated and deliberate mechanism for cutting down the trees of the people's life from the cradles of their universal environ-mentalities and from their unifying natural forces of their native language. This project can be called also the surgical project of 'cutting-off-the natural-tongue' for the implantation of an artificial-tongue.

Colonialism is an instrumental agent imposed by the colonial masters in order to pull a gag, tongue-tie and slang the colonized and gaga the use of their native language.

On account of such dispositions, you may often hear from the mouths of the Native-Igbo say, for example: *E ji Igbo eme gini?* (Is Igbo language of any use?).

At this point, it is very necessary to recall the first part of this paper where Hegel dealt with the concept of the *Universal Grammar* as the definitive proposition for the real presence of *use-functions* and the implied *water-marks* that score any given human language/linguistic with the goodness and existential references of/for the categorical imperatives for the universal lawfulness of the universal grounds of grammar in any given language (including e.g. Igbo language).

For Hegel, the concept of a universal grammar is implicitly a universal law that qualifies any given human language with the speak-able driving-licenses through which the expected competences and performances in any given language-use become realizable.

The above fact applies in all language/linguistic given-ness, that human socio-linguistics and philosophies of language with the date bases of use-uniqueness, existential qualities and qualifications, have all in all, the same common registers for equality among the ranks and files of all other human languages of the world (we may recall the McBride's UNESCO account above that all languages are equal).

Based on this Hegelian formula of the universal grammar, Igbo language for example, therefore is expected to also inhale its existence, equality, qualification and use-reality from the same Hegelian theories of grammar as universal ground.

Having noted the positions of Hegel on the above matters as referenced, it sounds like the tragedies of a suicide-bomber whereby this same Hegel in his book: *The Philosophy of History* found himself in what this paper calls a *terrible blooper*.

In this work, *The Philosophy of History* (p. 91-99), Hegel describes the historical continents of the African world, language and culture (South of the Sahara) with the following paraphrased hard words.

He says among others:

That Africa south of the Sahara (where you find Igboland also) is unknown to the Europe of his time. Within this section of his work, Hegel declared himself: "The grand master of hate-speeches, projector and fan of forced migrations by ways and means of his hallows for the Europeans in matters of slave trades and colonialisms."

Slave trade and colonialism were not very grave evils in Hegel's philosophy and history. Hegel found and described such activities as necessary European goods.

Africa, south of the Sahara, was for him, a *shut up*, enveloped in the dark mantles of *Night and Isolation*. This part of the world, according to him, is the Negro-world of sorcerers that do not conduct themselves through the consciousness of the *Higher Power-God*.

In Hegel's words, this part of Africa for him is the special home of ravenous beasts, snakes of all kinds-where man is wild and in the untamed state, nothing harmonious with their humanity and therefore is a border tract whose atmosphere is poisonous to Europeans.

Hegel says that the Negroes are that *perfect contempt for humanity* since their moral sentiments are quite weak, or more strictly speaking, non-existent because the universal spiritual laws cannot be recognized in Hegel's Africa.

From the Hegelian standpoint and assessment of the so called Negro world, their condition is capable of no development or culture and therefore they (Negros) have to continue to remain in what he calls *European Slaves* since the lack maturity, developed spirit, freedom and are unhistorical, live in the condition of mere nature and are at the threshold of the World's History.

Hegel concludes his assessment of Africa South of the Sahara by saying that:

At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again! (Hegel, 2004, p.99).

Voice of the Colonized

Professor Ngugi Wa Thiong'O during his 81st birthday on February 2020, had a parley with the Editors' Guild at Kenya where he spoke about the need to embrace the own-ness language which he calls *mother tongue*. In the words of Ngugi we learn that if you know all the languages of the world but you do not know your mother tongue, according to Ngugi, such a person dwells in a *mental enslavement*.

But if you know the language of your culture and add all other languages to your mastery and use of your mother tongue, that Ngugi calls *empowerment*.

Ngugi in his work on the language of African literature (*Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, London: James Currey, 1981) criticized Chinua Achebe, who says:

One

Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me (Achebe) there is no other choice. I (Achebe) have been given a language and I intend to use it.

Two

I feel that the English Language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings. (cf. *The African Writer and the English Language*, 1975, p.62).

Ngugi rightfully calls the above position of Chinua Achebe *paradoxical* and for this Ngugi says that for Achebe to have declared his position by his use of English as the only possibility in place of the use of his mother tongue, provokes a tone of levity in phrases like *a dreadful betrayal* and *a guilty feeling*; and that the use of English, though a foreign language, produces for him Achebe, an only categorical positive embrace. Ngugi further says that Achebe himself, ten years later, described his crisis situation as *this fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English in our literature*.

To this effect, Achebe's positions can be described as having spoken from the two sides of his mouth and tongue. The other issue would be the question how Achebe intends with his new English to transform the African experience and at the same time make English to carry the weight of the African experiences while still, according to him, this same English language remains in full communion with its ancestral home.

Achebe's position on this issue comes close to the dictum: *Eji Igbo eme gini?* as stated above.

Ngugi is very right and stands truly strong on the fact that English language is the language of our colonization and enslavement. For Ngugi language is a vehicle with a fascinating power, a power that holds the human soul a prisoner in its physical subjugation. The question arises again: How can Igbo language be transformed to balance out the whole weight of English language on the Igbo tongue as it is presently and still can remain a communicant of its ancestral homes?

From the above note therefore, experience teaches that all colonized language areas that maintain their colonial language applications still nurture and nature the extractions of the power of colonialism, that is to say, the transfer-mission-powers to control and recreate and re-designate the aboriginal world-hood of the colonized, their symbolic forms, their word-values, their linguistic images, their lexical meanings, their suggestive powers, their language-games, their riddles, their proverbs, their syllabic transportations, their fields of communal reflections, their content fields, their cultural prescriptions, their aphorisms etc.

On this very note, the colonial language and the myth of enslavement, for Frantz Fanon is that tragedy based on the colonial imposition of their language on the local national culture of which he says stands at all levels of any provisions and cultures.

Fanon emphasizes the facts that what he calls *National Culture* existed before colonialisms. Fanon maintains that colonialism is not satisfied with holding the colonized in their grip but further, that the colonized remain dominated while they (the colonized) empty their native brains in all forms and contents into the provisions of their colonial masters. Philosophy of language as we all know teaches that the first contender for the *ownership of meaning* is the language in/of **use**.

On the above note again the colonized by what Fanon calls *the perverted logics of the colonizers*, oppress, distort, disfigure, devalue, destroy the legitimacy of the history and pre-history of the colonized national rhythm of life, and culture. This is what Fanon calls the troubles of the tormented conscience.

Fanon at this instance defines national culture as: “The whole body of efforts made by a people in the share of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence” (Fanon, p.155). In the words of Braj B. Kachru (1986), English language among its colonial subjects is a tool of power, domination, and elitist identity. He generally speaks about the alchemy of English language as imperialism of prestige and power. Kachru cited an example of the traits of English colonial power for the neutralization and subjugation of the local indigenous language applications of lexical code-mixtures (*compositum mixtum- Engili-Igbo for example*), expressive instrumentality. For Kachru, code-mixing has the power to gradually neutralize the native language world and culture. Thus Kachru describes the colonial language as a neutralizing force advanced through the powers of code-mixing/code-switching.

Neutralization thus is a linguistic strategy used to ‘unload/offload’ the own-ness linguistic items from their traditional, cultural and emotional local connotations by avoiding most language/linguistic items consciously as signals of prestige or unconsciously as signals of the language/linguistic decay and gradual death of the colonized language.

The use and choice of linguistic items from the colonial imperial code-mixing/code-switching based on borrowed language/linguistic items, guarantee referential meanings that have no cultural connotations within the context of the specific culture thus the colonized develop new codes in the vernacular language/linguistic registers.

The dangers of gradual death-processions become noticeable through the unconscious devaluations and usages of the colonized language/linguistic registers with the uses of some code-mixed expressions like:

I would have invited you over, mana nne m agaghi ekwe;

This topic is very difficult. Agaghi m ede ya;

I came to the house. Mana I noghi ya;

Biko nyere m aka. I want to shift this table etc.

With such code-mixing and code-switching, the Igbo speaker keeps shifting the own-ness language onto death.

On the above note, Kachru calls this process the 'Alchemy of English' which infuses language/linguistic processes of transmutation and products of language/linguistic tools for manipulation and control across the language/linguistic cultures of the colonized language/linguistic areas.

The effects of the above become obvious through the gradual processes and processions towards language/linguistic deaths.

Gareth Griffiths (1994) applies the idea that a colonial language supplies to the colonized 'the myth of authenticity' which is also called a danger complicating the possibilities for an authentic voice that also fetter authentic, traditional and local voices of the colonized and render and/or make them *fringe dweller* in their 'own-ness language/linguistic world and territoriality.

On account of the colonial imposition of English language for example, the aboriginal legitimate culture of the colonized people become a divided community with a subaltern speech community silenced with a *partial-contact-education* that also stands as a *metaphor of violence*.

In the words of Gareth Griffiths, therefore, this metaphor of violence renders the colonized people a people whose *tongues are cut out* in the fight for their *cultural space*.

A colonial language therefore becomes the power of displacement, disruption and the hybrid for discursive control and partial contact education. English, as a colonial language for example, creates the dark spaces of subaltern voices in subordination and parodies of suppression and dominance.

The above can also be called the colonial orientation that processes the aftereffects of what can be called a *Linguistic Exile*. This is also true since the

imposition of the English language, for example, creates myths of enslavements that are perfected by ways and means of constructive language power and prestige while the native language of the colonized begins to lose through what is known as *language shift*, *language death* and ends up losing in the language/linguistic competition through the impresses of attitudinal neutrality to their own-ness language and grammar.

English language at this point becomes the only safe medium through which the colonized feel most appropriate while addressing higher social matters (like teaching philosophy in a University) and status and by so doing hide in their use-inabilities in their vernacular language registers and thereby reduce their native and own-ness language to becoming *alien and substandard* for classroom applications and through this, the natives or the colonized perfect the conception and theme of this paper: **Alienation**.

Why do we still teach philosophy with English language and not Igbo? English claims a universal and resounding *Amen* while a re-think to teach and write philosophy in Igbo is near *anathema*. Even in the instances where a student would wish to write his/her project in the local language arguments like: Igbo is not an official language approved for such in our Universities. We are clear on the reason why such arguments. The reason is all about the incompetence of the teaches in the use of the local language.

On the above facts therefore, English as a colonial language becomes the instrument of language/linguistic transmutation and tool for sociolinguistic manipulations. Therefore, the native language and the colonial English must remain in a perpetual gladiatorial contest that leads the local language to *linguicide*.

The imposition of the colonial language on any native language/linguistic platform as presented above, remains and maintains the powers of the colonial language as a gradual conspiracy of silence on the colonized native language in order to achieve in them a repressive pedagogy and uncoupling of their native linguistic/language valued independence and conceptualisms.

In the words of Babaci-Wilhite (2012) she says that a colonial language like English is a dominant language at the cost of the local knowledge and language (mother tongue) in favor of the colonial language that obstructs the native social organization.

Nyerere (1967 p. 44-76) on the same note as above also says that it has been part of the colonial deliberate process to change the language/linguistic

values and traditions of the colonized and replace their traditional knowledge with knowledge from a different society.

To support the above position further, Okonkwo (2001) speaks about colonialism and slave trade as the major European tool of tools used to power what he notes as *forced migration and the cross road of African (folks) philosophy*.

It is a fact that in doing philosophy from the frames and claims of an own-ness philosophy as such, whoever proceeds to do so is expected to bring this philosophy to bear on the instrumental functional factors of his/her ready-to-hand own-ness domesticated culture-relative-language/linguistic habits in order to qualify and designate his/her proceeds/products as English, African, Igbo etc. It is time therefore for the colonized to start the processes of a *linguistic turn* for the rebirth of their own-ness language-culture-referent-philosophy- the own-ness Igbo philosophy as such -done and dusted-through and through Igbo language.

When, on the other hand, such philosophical proceeds flow out of the harvests of language/linguistic-multiculturalisms, then the proceeds become inter-cultural philosophy. But the dealings of philosophy that must be call Igbo, English, French etc. must be a processed philosophy that must have gone through the search-machines of the own-ness language/linguistics crucibles.

To this effect, we can understand Sodipo's 1984, UNESCO publication where he says that it is unfair to regard a priori the absence of writing in a culture as absence of reflection and criticism in that same culture, and consequently as the absence of philosophy in that same culture. Sodipo means here that philosophy is inherent in and natural to all human languages and cultures. Therefore, philosophy needs to be activated and processed through the active use of the given natural language and culture of the same people and thereafter can rightly gain more rights of the baptism to be called Igbo, English, French etc.

Since philosophy is made out of all that is, according to Ernst Cassirer (1944), human symbolic forms, facticity, self-knowledge and self-realization, it becomes therefore a fundamental imperative that such knowledge-harvests must also flow from the own-ness language/linguistic world and the instrumentalism of the imbued and inherent natural own-ness language/linguistic culture available to the said native philosopher.

It is important to note here that Chinua Achebe whose work *Things Fall Apart* has been published in almost one hundred languages of the world during his life-time did not give his *votum* or *fiat* for the translation of this same work in his mother tongue-Igbo. Professor P.A. Ezikeojiaku (a Professor of Linguistics/Igbo) went ahead with the idea to translate and publish same work in Achebe's mother tongue (Igbo) with the title *Agharata*. Because of Achebe's nonchalance, this work has remained unpopular and unknown to the Igbo academic world.

On account of the above, this paper states that philosophy and culture have a common root and denominator. This is to say that philosophy can only survive and strives through the possible resultant mergers of the given own-ness and available *conditio humana*, *analogia universi* and *analogia hominis* whereby philosophy can be called the human own-ness basic process in self-determination and self-liberation (Okonkwo, 2001, p.42).

From the above issues therefore, it is clear that the exercise of doing philosophy as an own-ness philosophy must be linguistically culture-bound and relative *ex analogia hominis* before this same philosophy can become a process *ex analogia universi*.

Therefore, the ultimate use of English language and grammar in the case of this paper means, doing philosophy with a language/linguistic brain-wave, brain-wave migration, and brain-wave intellectual racism. Therefore, an alienation of the own-ness cultural language/linguistic ecology will produce a fragmented philosophy with a delusive concept of self-depreciation. Such a philosophy can only leads the colonized, due to the executive and absolute use of the colonial English, end up in elitisms that can only proceed to process the risks of dogmatisms powered through their persistent catechisms of their English language *Alma Mater*.

On this note, what we commonly call Igbo (African) philosophy is so far a conscious scheme of forced mental and conceptual migration just as the author himself is doing here.

Therefore, writing philosophy with the colonial English language makes the harvest of my ideas an *Alma Mater philosophy* because English language cannot *short-change* my native own-ness Language-Igbo as an equivalent.

On account of the above, Kwasi Wiredu (1984, p. 35) proposes a conceptual decolonization of the so called African Philosophy. Wiredu says that to decolonize our philosophical thinking mean divesting our thought of all

undue influences emanating from the modes of thought of our erstwhile colonizers. He also emphasizes the fact that the linguistic conceptual liberation is key and most fundamental in this process of decolonization.

For Wiredu decolonizing African philosophy as such implies the process of exploiting our own-ness languages in order to learn from the countervailing pulls of how to separate independent considerations from our present *tongue-tied-dependencies* designed by the imposed colonial languages.

To understand the above situation more clearly, Hountondji says also that we as Africans must ask ourselves questions and answer them. He asks if it is possible to imagine any art of philosophy that remains neutral, untagged and unengaged as a rigorous science without transcending through the conflicts of class struggles between the people and their exploiters, between the dominated people and the centers of imperialism, instruments of repression and their victims. It is time for the colonized therefore *to untie their tongue-tied-tongues*.

From the above positions therefore, there is an urgent need for a new version of *Linguistic Turn* for the gains of an Igbo-African philosophy **qua** Igbo-African philosophy as such.

As Africans, we must understand that the imposition of colonial languages on our *socio-facts and menti-facts*, and our continuous adaptive modes for the deliveries of our claims of/for 'Igbo/African Philosophy', we must reconsider our willingness to remain under the perpetual forces of a language/linguistic slavery and also remain in the willingness to continue to be victims and agents of *linguicides* for our own-ness language and philosophy.

It is also important to note that the length of time and years of English domestication in Igboland cannot transform English to be a native Igbo tongue. It is said that once you forget the past you forfeit the future. This is history.

Conclusion

The major concern of this paper is to express the author's sincere conviction that many, who are teachers of philosophy in Igboland for example, have never written and/or published any of their academic works in Igbo-their mother tongue. This is the case in point. Many may find this work majorly and highly qualified for a waste paper basket- no problems at all.

This paper recalls the worries of Professor M. J. C. Echeruo (1982) who says that a language survives and prosper only if it is preserved and enriched by each new generation of speakers and each in its own season (cf. p.228). In his words therefore, Igbo studies and he mentioned philosophy in particular, will not grow properly until we learn to think of the adult reader first, until we learn to confront our adult population and offer our children that part of our linguistic habits which is appropriate to their need and their abilities (p.229). Therefore a proper understanding of Igbo philosophy is ultimately dependent on a proper use and understanding of Igbo language (p.231).

Be it as it may, philosophy as the science of sciences must remain and will continue to exist as the conditioner of and for truth so that the veils of our colonial English honorary respects and special regards will continue to consecrate and decorate our literary dependencies. English language has been domesticated as our academic lingual basement, comfort zonal history, knowledge inclinations, dependencies and almost our *Alma Mater* credo. This is the case of this paper.

It is credited to Dr. Henrick Clark to have said that:

To control a people, you must first control what they think about themselves and how they regard their history and culture. And when your conqueror makes you ashamed of your culture and history, he needs no prison walls and chains to hold you. (c.f. Okorie, p.12)

The above statement marks really the contents of the colonial enslavements that massively walled and chained our, Igbo language/linguistic culture including our philosophical socio-facts and menti-facts. In the words of Slemon Stephen (p. 45) colonialism has through the imposition of the English language, structurally rerouted and retooled the natural *nativist* philosophical portmanteau and thereby paved the way for the development of a new intellectual, structurally fractured and fragmented literary institution for new intellectual cadres especially in the universities.

On the grounds of the above, it is most impossible to define what has been claimed and domesticated as Igbo philosophy/ African philosophy. The question this short paper is asking is: What is the nature of an intellectual process that brackets out and isolates its own-ness existential/essential ingredients of its own-ness culture, its own-ness shared values of language, its logics, its conceptual analytic/synthesis, its paramount linguistic *modus*

vivendi, etc. and still can stand and define/design its claims of doing an own-ness (Igbo/African) philosophy?

It is said that you cannot eat your cake and have it!

Colonialism, as Dr. Henrich Clark puts it, is the process that pollutes the people's ideas, governs their ideas of mental speculations, critical constructions and examinations. Colonialism creates prison-walls and chains of dependencies and at the same time fashions the death of the native language and culture which this paper calls *linguicide*.

There is no doubts that what may be called cultural liberation must start from the liberation from the dependencies of foreign colonial dominations of language/linguistic expressivities as the only medium for the productive forces for the determinations and deliveries of philosophical goods among the colonized.

To expose the problems of the dependencies of the colonized on conceptual expressivities (the colonial language), it is most important to ask ourselves as the colonized, a simple question:

What is the word for philosophy in your mother tongue? (cf. Okonkwo, 2017-Back page; Achara, p.20-29)

It is Martin Heidegger, 1959, p.164) who says that:

Erst wo das Wort gefunden ist fuer das Ding, ist das Ding ein Ding (First of all, it is where a word is found for the thing is the thing a thing). Heidegger means therefore that nothing can exist or be where there is no word for it. On this note, the query on our common claims that we are doing Igbo/African philosophy becomes clearer. How can our common use of colonial English become transformable into Igbo language for the securities of/for the claims of doing an Igbo philosophy? Igbo says that: *Anaghi eji Mmanya onyeozo ekpere onyeozo Ikpe* (You do not use another person's wine to settle another person's case)

How can our common use of the colonial English in Nigeria become transformable or translatable into Igbo language for the securities of/for an Igbo philosophy? We all know that there is a distinction between the people's philosophy born out of their own-ness written language-culture and an

intercultural philosophy that exists out of the methods and appreciations of two or more language/linguistic approaches and appreciations.

On a final note, this paper recalls John Dewey definition of all human languages and states that language is the **Tool of Tools**. Accordingly, Dewey states that:

As to be a tool, or to be used as means for consequences, is to have and to endow with meaning, language, being the tool of tools, is the cherishing mother of all significance. For other instrumentalities and agencies, the things usually thought of as appliances, agencies and furnishings can originate and develop only in social groups made possible by language.

It is time to recognize that Igbo language has all the instrumentalities, agencies, appliances, furnishings, possibilities and means as tool of tools for the doing of an own-ness Igbo philosophy.

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