

WORLDVIEWS, THOUGHT AND WORD ORDER TEACHING AND LEARNING IN NIGERIA

¹B.M. MBAH & ²J.U. AKABOGU

¹Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

²Department of Arts Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Though language is not the sole determinant of the way people think, it reflects their pattern of thought. Language therefore plays a critical role in reflecting the worldviews across cultures. The role of English as an exoglossic official language in Nigeria disposes it to reflect the sentiments of English in writing and impose the same on the Nigerian languages, which are taught using English as a medium of instruction. By using English as a medium of teaching the Nigerian languages, many teachers of Nigerian languages, by their English training, get influenced to adapt the orthography of Nigerian languages to that of English. However, this position is resisted by views, which hold that the linguistic features of English, which may reflect the worldview of the English, do not account for those of Nigerians. This paper takes Igbo, one of the official languages of Nigeria as a case study of this interplay of the language system and thought in Igbo pedagogy.

It attempts to find out the implications of this difference between worldview and language on the one hand and the imposition of the morpho-syntax of English on Igbo. It investigates the implications of this influence on the Igbo learner. Using a descriptive method of analysis, the paper finds out that though English is used to teach Igbo, its structures neither reflect the worldviews of the Igbo nor its linguistic patterns. Thus, the learner of Igbo is torn in between thinking in English and reflecting the Igbo worldview in writing or vice versa. This dilemma retroactively affects the Igbo learner of English or Igbo. The paper formulates a guiding orthographical principle which helps the learner of Igbo to achieve linguistic orthographic accuracy.

KEY WORDS: Worldview, Thought, Tone, Morphology, Syntax, Teaching, Learning