

Greetings from the United States.

Oha na eze ekelee m unu. O juru m afo nke ukwu n'ihhi na nro m nile maka ino na nzuko a aputala ife. Obibia m n'ebe a bu igosi otu obibi ndu ndi mmadu bi n'ebe tere aka si metuta ndu ndi mmadu ozo n'uzo di iche iche. Amara m maka osisi ukpaka nke ogbe ya na-agbawa, were tukesia mkpuru ya ebe di iche iche ka ha noro ebe ahupu, were mia mkpuru nke ha. Otu a ka unu bu ndi Igbo siri zigasia umu unu n'akuku uwa nile, ka ha jee nweta oke mmuta akwukwo. Ikekwe dika mkpuru ukpaka, ufodu n'ime ha ga-ebi ebe ha gbagara, ma otutu n'ime ha ga-alota n'ala Igbo nna ha nyere ndi be ha aka. Umu unu na-eme ezi ihe omuma atu n'ebe o bula ha no; ha na-ebi n'udo, na-agba oke mbo, na-amusikwa akwukwo ha ike. Obi di m uto na otutu n'ime ha bi n'obodo m bu Little Rock, Arkansas, nke di na ndida U.S.A. N'ihhi na abu m onye otu na-ahu maka odimma nke umu akwukwo si mba ozo bia Little Rock, enwere m otutu enyi n'ime ha, mutakwa otutu ihe gbasatara oke obodo unu bu Africa. Nke ka nke, enwere m oke aguu imu ezigbo asusu unu. Eziokwu, enwetakwuola m otutu amamihe site n'imu asusu Igbo. M nodu na-ege ndi Igbo nti n'olu, ana m achoputa na ikekwe asusu Igbo agaghi adite aka n'ihhi na asusu Bekee na-achogbagbu ya n'ime oke osimiri. I gee ndi Igbo nti n'olu, i ga-anu okwu di otu a: "(My mother) na-abia. O si (that) na (my brother) ga-e-(meeti) ya (on the way). " Ana m aju unu si "Asusu Igbo, o ga-akwudokwa ngbagbu nkea asusu Bekee na-achogbau ya?"

O juru m afo imata na unu nwere otu SPILC nke na-ehekwa asusu na omenala Igbo. Mgbe m biara Nigeria n'onwa February, 1978, azutara m akwukwo nke aha ya bu "Igbo Language & Culture". Akwukwo ahu toro m uto nke ukwu. O bukwa mgbe ahu ka m zuru Dr. Ugonna bu onye ziri m bia nzuko a (tata) nke a na-eme otu ugboro n'afo. Ano m na nzuko a tata, ka m gee nti, were mutakwuo ihe banyere asusu na omenala unu.

Na mmechi, ana m aja unu ike, na-agwakwa unu na asusu na omenala unu bu otu n'ime ndi nile na-ewetara umu mmadu udo na ihunanya.

Udo diri unu nile.

Frances W. Pritchett.

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Original English version

Ladies and Gentlemen: I am so happy that my dream of attending this conference has come true. My presence here is a demonstration of how human lives reach out and touch each other, sometimes in unexpected ways. I learned with interest about your ukpaka tree, which shoots out its seeds long distances away from the main trunk. Like this tree, the Igbo people have sent out their young men and women to all parts of the world in pursuit of education. Perhaps most of these young people will return to settle in the homeland, but some, like the ukpaka seeds, will put down roots in new locations. But they leave their marks on the communities where they live and study and struggle, and I feel fortunate that many of them chose to come to the small city in the southern United States which is my home. Because I joined a group to offer assistance to the foreign students in Little Rock, I was rewarded with new and interesting friends, a wider knowledge of your great continent, and above all the desire to study your delightful language. My life has been enriched beyond all expectations.

As I listened to the Igbo speakers in my city, I became concerned that the Igbo language might not survive the tidal wave of English sweeping over it. It is now being diluted-- will it some day be completely dissolved? Because of my concern,

I was especially overjoyed to learn of the existence of the SPILC. On my first trip to Nigeria in February, 1978, I discovered the book "Igbo Language & Culture," published as a result of your earlier seminars, and found it right in line with my interests. I also became acquainted with Dr. Ugonna, who suggested that I might be permitted to attend your next annual meeting. So I am here to listen and to learn and, I hope, to reassure you that people from all parts of the world, from very different backgrounds, can bring each other friendship and love.

Peace and love are the best things in the world!