

Re: Learning a language

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From: Eugene Holman (*holman_at_elo.helsinki.fi*)

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In article <40CAFC8D.14B8@worldnet.att.net>, "Peter T. Daniels" <grammatim@worldnet.att.net> wrote:

> *Eugene Holman wrote:*

<deltions>

>>

>> *Having earned my living teaching and publishing in (historical, computer,*

>> *Baltic-Finnic, sociolinguistics) linguistics for more than thirty years,*

>> *and being the former student of several linguists of renown, including*

>> *Frederick Agard, Charles Hockett, James Marchand, Herbert Kufner,*

>

> *You were at Cornell about the same time I was???*

Class of '66 [I graduated a term early, in January '66].

> *(Then how did you*

> *manage to avoid Robert A. Hall, Jr.,*

I knew and was on good terms with Bob Hall due to our Friday afternoon linguistics colloquium, but, specializing in Germanic (Marchand, Kufner) and Slavic (Liston, the Samilovs) linguistics, as well as general linguistics (Hockett, Kelly, Franklin, Durbin), I never took any courses from him.

> *the first linguist to take an interest in pidginization?)*

What?! Have you never heard of Hugo Schuchardt, the father of pidgin/creole studies?

>> *Wilhelm*

>> *Schmidt, Yuri Rozhdestvensky, Lauri Posti, Erkki Itkonen, Raimo Anttila,*

>> *Pertti Virtaranta, Robert Austerlitz, Kalevi Wiik, Nils Erik Enkvist, and*

>> *Fred Karlsson, I will consign that remark to the garbage bin where it*

>> *belongs.*

>

> *Language acquisition was not a significant field of study in linguistics*

> *in those days (though Chas Hockett bristled when years later I suggested*

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- > *they didn't take acquisition phenomena into account -- but the topic is*
- > *barely mentioned in his textbook).*
- >
- > > *Theories in the humanities are necessarily generalizations which often*
- > > *show their weaknesses when confronted with empirical data. I am*
- > > *questioning the alleged primacy of the role of the native speaker in the*
- > > *elaboration of creoles from pidgins, something whic*