

Re: Learning a language

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2004-06/0912.html>

From: alexB (alex7623_at_hotmail.com)

Date: 06/15/04

Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2004 07:16:32 -0400

"Eugene Holman" <holman@elo.helsinki.fi> wrote in message
news:holman-1506040615190001@c518-m3.eng.helsinki.fi...
> *In article <10csjepkib16f22@corp.supernews.com>, "alexB"*
> *<alex7623@hotmail.com> wrote:*
>
>> *"Eugene Holman" <holman@elo.helsinki.fi> wrote in message*
>> *news:holman-1506040119090001@c518-m3.eng.helsinki.fi...*
>> *<deletions>*
>>
>> *Thanks for explaining. I appreciate it. I will have to read it 5 more*
times
>> *at least to get a sense (perhaps) of some fine print. There is also a*
huge
>> *gap between us and ultimately it boils down to how differently our minds*
>> *work. It is aside from the fact that I am totally ignorant in the*
matters
>> *you are talking about. My hope is to catch the pith.*
>>
>> *I want to use this opportunity to test your theory. I will give it a*
>> *touchstone. But first I want to rephrase the key part to make sure I*
>> *understood it correctly. You are saying that what happened at Martha's*
>> *Vineyard can be used as a model to the fact that a separate pidgin*
English
>> *(apart from a standard English) was developed 300 years ago by the*
African
>> *slaves in America.*
>
> *In a very general sense, yes. The speakers of a language, any language,*
> *are constantly subject to conflicting social pressures to express*
> *themselves so that they can be understood by everyone else who speaks the*
> *same language, and to use the language in a way which expresses their*
> *individuality and thus distinguishes them and the peer group they*
> *identify with at any particular time from everyone else. For a*
> *relatively recent theoretical framework, see L. Milroy 1987, *Language and*
> *Social Networks*. In the slave subcultures that developed in North America*
> *there were many communicative needs, but one of*