

Re: Responding to a challenge

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2004-07/2880.html>

From: Zobby (zobby_at_zobby.com)

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Date: Fri, 23 Jul 2004 19:15:42 -0400

On Wed, 21 Jul 2004 01:23:36 -0500, Raymond S. Wise wrote:

> *In a discussion in the newgroup fr.lettres.langue.anglaise , I expressed the
> opinions which follow (the numbered points below). A poster accused me of
> being pseudoscientific and writing for propaganda purposes—I can only guess
> that he had in mind my advocacy of Esperanto. I am an Esperantist, but I'm*

This poster was me.

Yes, I accused you of being pseudo-scientific and writing for propaganda purposes. After reading this last message, I accuse you also of being dishonest.

Of course I had in mind your advocacy of Esperanto. The thread was called "langue internationale" and the topic was Esperanto. What else could I have had in mind?

> *also a former student of linguistics who continues to have a keen interest
> in language, and the following represent what I take not only to be the
> consensus of linguists on the matters in question, but boringly so: That is,
> I'd be very surprised if any of the following points was part of a hot
> ongoing controversy in linguistics. The poster challenged me to present my
> ideas in this newsgroup, and I am taking him up on that challenge. I would
> like to add, however, that I don't believe any of the points is really
> original with me: They are either statements which I have read in works by
> linguists (or in the case of Anthony Burgess, an amateur linguist), or they
> follow logically from what those men and women have written.
>
> The poster claimed that ideas such as the following had been much discussed
> in this newsgroup. Let me say, in consequence, that you may treat this as*

No. "The poster" did not claim that. He did not mention most of these points at all. What he claimed (and *I* would know) is that the notion of language complexity, and the simplicity of Esperanto in particular, had been discussed here many times. He then claimed that there was, in his opinion, no consensus on the question. He further expressed the opinion that *if* there is a consensus, it is that language complexity is impossible to measure, or at least to compare across different languages.

sci.lang: Re: Responding to a challenge

How would we compare complexity in morphology ver