

Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-05/msg00965.html>

- *From:* "Brian M. Scott" <b.scott@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 21 May 2005 12:47:19 -0400
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On Sat, 21 May 2005 21:14:48 +1200, benlizross
<benlizro@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in
<news:428EFC08.2108@xxxxxxxxxxx> in sci.lang:

> Brian M. Scott wrote:

>> On Sat, 21 May 2005 10:20:05 +1200, benlizross
>> <benlizro@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in
>> <news:428E6295.14DB@xxxxxxxxxxx> in sci.lang:

>> [...]

>>> In the meantime, I'll say:

>>> – names are words (which are socially assigned to individuals);

>> I don't know what account Peter has in mind, but I don't
>> consider names to be words in the ordinary sense of the
>> word. Cecily Clark, 'Onomastics', in vol. 2 of the
>> Cambridge History of the English Language:

>> Names, whether of places or of people, have by
>> definition a distinctive standing vis-à-vis the
>> language at large. Although ultimately derived
>> from elements of common vocabulary (not
>> necessarily that of the language they currently
>> grace), they have become emptied of their
>> original etymological denotation; and this is true
>> even for those whose form still coincides with
>> that of the related lexical items: no-one expects
>> to find cattle wading across the river at Oxford
>> and, should a Mr Butcher actually be in the
>> meat trade, the coincidence almost excites mirth.

> But this is no more than the old truth that etymology is
> not the basis of meaning.

No, it's the claim that names have a different *kind* of

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meaning from ordinary words, and I think that it's entirely correct.

[...]

Brian

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◇ From: benlizross

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◇ From: Lee Sau Dan
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