

Re: Invention of the Alphabet

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-08/msg00411.html>

- *From:* Greg Lee <greg@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 6 Aug 2005 01:23:41 GMT
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Des Small <des.small@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

> Greg Lee <greg@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> writes:

>> Des Small <des.small@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

>> ...

>>> I've persisted in defending Peter's very concrete and explicit test

>>> for opacity.

>> ...

>>

>> But LSD makes the points that opaque expressions are not necessarily

>> words

> They're either lexical words or idioms. Since they lack internal

> features, everyone except Chinese chauvinistes tends to call them

> words, and I continue not to see a reason not to.

What's "they"? Opaque expressions? I can't make sense of this.

> "Non-transparently decomposable morpheme-compounds with no interior

> morphological structure (other than compounding)" is usefully

> distinguishable from "word" in what way or manner?

It leaves out words that are not compounds, and it leaves out words that are transparent compounds, like "lighthouse keeper".

> LSD had to cheat

> with "kick the bucket"; even he hasn't claimed "strawberry" isn't a

> word – would you?

>> and that compound words are not necessarily opaque.

> He's calling them compound words in Chinese? News to me.

>> Therefore, a test for opacity is not a good test for words. These

>> are good points.

> You think?

> Des

> doesn't

—

Greg Lee <greg@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

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• **References:**

- ◆ **Invention of the Alphabet**
◇ From: Dennis
 - ◆ **Re: Invention of the Alphabet**
◇ From: Lee Sau Dan
 - ◆ **Re: Invention of the Alphabet**
◇ From: Peter T. Daniels
 - ◆ **Re: Invention of the Alphabet**
◇ From: Des Small
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