

Re: Plausibility Check

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Peter T. Daniels wrote:

No, I did not. Someone may have (whatever "going cocos" and "going mangos" may be), but it wasn't I.

I stand by my word.

WHY WOULD I NOT SEND A MESSAGE REPLYING TO SOMEONE, TO THE GROUP WHICH THAT SOMEONE WAS READING?

Woz your problem? Get acquainted with the Google interface of sci.lang.

That wasn't how it worked in Netscape. The groups always appeared in the same order, whoever was posting in the thread.

From what I remember of Netscape the discussions in the groups were difficult to follow. Being a moron I prefer Google (and allow them to use this statement of mine for advertising purposes).

So everyone else who might be following the thread in the other three groups should be deprived of my response as well?

You are not forced to remove the other groups, but you can do so if you wish. Or you can add a group. As you like.

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What, monks can't be anthropologists? Was Gregor Mendel not a botanist?
Was Teilhard de Chardin (a priest, rather than a monk) not an anthropologist?

Yes. Monks can also be linguists, Pater Rupert Ruhstaller for one, who proposed a revolutionary grammar based on arguments and functors and visualized by means of budding circles.

Yet you parrot Nazi ideology — "the lower classes have impoverished vocabulary."

No, I do not speak of an impoverished vocabulary, I speak of small vocabularies. There are people with a small vocabulary. However, the number of words are not all that counts, language got further elements that are equally important, musicality, rhythm, mimics, gestures, body language – elements you are dismissing from your narrow understanding of language.

No, there are not people with a "very small" (define "very small") vocabulary (unless, of course, they are brain-damaged).

4,000 words are a small vocabulary, but many people manage well with that small number of words. We also learned that with 200 English words one can travel across the USA, from New York to San Francisco. Does this make English a poor language? No. English is easily accessible on a basic level, and highly demanding on the top level.

I know the number of words claimed by contemporary lexicographers, and I know how much the vocabulary has grown over the last few centuries, and I know that scientific writing essentially didn't exist in English before the late 17th century, and expansion of the vocabulary by assimilation of exotic loanwords didn't particularly set in until the 18th century (with widespread British imperialism).

When I quoted from that radio program saying English in the time of Shakespeare had 200,000 words you replied that I am lying about a fact. So tell me the fact. Tell me how many words English counted in the time of Shakespeare.

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Doubtless the electronic OED enables you to count the number of words with citations between 1590 and 1620. I don't have access. Maybe someone else does.

I don't consult online dictionaries, I look up the real stuff on paper, the 23 volumes of the Middle English dictionary, the many volumes of the Oxford English dictionary, Pokorny in print, and of course the dozen or so volumes of the Idiotikon, the dictionary of my native language.

You're fond of going to libraries ... I had better things to do at the NYPL yesterday, things relating to my own work, on the one hand, and research, on the other.

Why do you think am I frequenting the university library?
For the same reasons.

Why? He was 200 years earlier and did not publish on scientific topics. Nor did he write novels and essays on everything under the sun. Maybe Isaac Asimov used a vocabulary as large as Goethe's, because he, too, published on everything under the sun (except linguistics — once I asked him howcome, and he answered that he needs to know something about a subject before he writes about it: an attitude I wish more people would share. He did publish many books on etymology, a topic, I keep reminding everyone, is rather distant from linguistics.)

Yes, that's a good explanation why Goethe's vocabulary was larger than the one by Shakespeare.

Why do you feel that sharing your meta–methodology would be of interest?

If someone should be interested in these questions – how many words did Chaucer, Shakespeare, Homer use? how many authors were involved in the case of Homer and perhaps of Shakespeare? what do we know about the taxonomy of the various versions of the Canterbury Tales? etc. – they got a name, Ricardo Mansilla, and there is the author I could find out about. If I get a problem I consult people who are working in the field, it's very easy with the great facility of the Internet, and they are usually very nice. I encourage young readers to do the same.

Yes, you did speak of the Middle Ages. Several times.

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Where? I spoke and speak of the era of Middle English (1066 – 1475).

If that is an accurate representation of what the radio program said (many years ago, you admit), then now you know it is not a reliable source of information. It would be preferable to think you misremember it than that it purveys misinformation to the entire population of Switzerland.

Stop it now !!! Tell us how many words English had in the time of Shakespeare, or get away from me.

Yet you don't recall that just yesterday you wrote of the Middle Ages. Several times.

Tell me one message in this thread where I spoke of the Middle Ages, apart from correcting you as now. I spoke of the era of Middle English, era of Middle English, era of Middle English, era of Middle English, era of Middle English, era of Middle English, era of Middle English (our teacher in the primary school complained that he has to tell us everything seven times until we finally get it, and then, one morning, he came to school beaming: he just read an article about neurology, and it said the brain needs to be told seven times ... He came to the same conclusion from his experience as a teacher).

Perhaps you are at the age of retirement, like Lance Armstrong or that French head-butting guy.

That French head-butting guy, Zinedine Zidane, was badly provoked by Materazzi, three times. There is now a song about Zizou's head-butting, big summer hit in France. And, no, I am not in the age of retirement. Nor am I in my eighties, as you believed earlier on.

So you hadn't when I wrote this, had you.

That's correct. On the other hand, why should I do all the work for you when you call me a liar because I quoted from a radio program? You said I am lying about a fact, but you can't tell me the fact, namely the number of English words

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Shakespeare's time. And of course no apologies for all the false accusations in this thread.

Franz Gnaedinger

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