

From: Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>
To: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>
CC: "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Re:
Date: Mon, 02 Nov 2015 02:45:56 +0000

Interesting questions, and there is some evidence about them.

There are pretty well established cases of invention of language, essentially identical to known languages, with no linguistic input: several cases of groups of deaf people inventing sign languages, some of deaf children who invented their own sign language playing together. In these cases it's pretty clear that linguistic input was zero or at most very minimal. They did, of course, have social contacts with humans, which may matter. That can be a triggering, if not shaping, factor in development of innate capacities.

Can't do the obvious experiments for ethical reasons, but it's a fair surmise that a human without even such contacts would not develop language, or probably survive, except very marginally (like the case of Genie, which you've probably come across – though one has to be cautious of the popular expositions).

On Israel, the rightward drift – maybe plunge by now – is deeply disturbing.

From: jeffrey E. [mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, November 01, 2015 3:32 AM
To: Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re:

do you need a pair of humans for language? do you need a pair for all thinking initially. is the cognitive system more than just the individual? does one imitate their caregiver. what happens when no caregiver. re Israel, moving farther right I am told. rather than a wake up call

On Sat, Oct 31, 2015 at 11:43 PM, Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Some progress, some regression. But there's light at the end of the tunnel, and it shouldn't be too far away.

Open questions abound. The problem is finding ones that are within possible reach and are not so technical that larger consequences are obscure.

Hilbert could do it after many years of substantial progress in a well-defined area. I don't know if anyone's tried even in physics.

From: jeffrey E. [mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2015 7:22 PM
To: Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>
Subject:

progress valeria? chomsky open questions?

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