

**From:** Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Re:  
**Date:** Mon, 02 Nov 2015 14:54:54 +0000

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I don't see how his elaborate efforts go beyond what had been done long before, using primitive technology: recording. It gets a lot of data, but doesn't tell us much.

The particular topic that seems to interest him – what's called "motherese" in the literature (the way parents talk to children) – has been studied pretty carefully, notably by Lila Gleitman, the best psycholinguist in the modern period, I think (and an old friend). There doesn't seem to be much to it. And it's known that children develop language normally under all sorts of circumstances, including conditions very much unlike the ultra-nurturing ones that Roy is investigating. E.g., with no input, as in the cases I mentioned.

And the results about words can't be right. At peak periods of language growth, children are picking them up at rate of about one per waking hour.

Noam

**From:** jeffrey E. [mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 01, 2015 11:57 PM  
**To:** Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re:

i thought you might have an idea of how to do an experiment. given the new tech

On Sun, Nov 1, 2015 at 9:54 PM, Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]> wrote:

I rarely watch video, but did go through the first 10 minutes. Underwhelmed.

**From:** jeffrey E. [mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 01, 2015 6:03 PM  
**To:** Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:**

first 10 minutes are interesting [https://www.ted.com/talks/deb\\_roy\\_the\\_birth\\_of\\_a\\_word?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/deb_roy_the_birth_of_a_word?language=en)

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