
From: jeffrey E. <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2015 7:22 PM
To: Noam Chomsky
Subject: Re:

i want the machine to be put in an environment , wit= 5 different languages and learn them . do your th=nk watching movies. might help

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On Mon, Sep 7, 2015 at 8:06 PM, Noam Chomsky =span dir="ltr">[REDACTED] wrote:

Don't know if or when this le=ter will get sent. Lots of internet problems the last few days. =A0 One of the problems of living in a third world country. Paris is better, I'm sure.

These are interesting suggestions, bu= I'm not sure they are the right ones. They're very =ifferent from the Hilbert questions. These were deeply embedded in rich theoretical understanding, and were at the borders of such understand=ng. Furthermore, solving the problems would have a major impact on enrichi=g mathematics.

They were very different from the imi=ation game, which, as Turing explained, had no particular intellectual int=rest but could be useful in encouraging the development of better hardware/software. Incidentally, as a matter of historical=accuracy, I'm keeping to his famous paper. Elsewhere he seem= to have taken it more seriously.

In formulating suggestions, it is imp=rtant to avoid the fashionable (and moronic) approach of google-style stat=stical analysis of Big Data. Thus one could perhaps get a better prediction of leaves blowing in the wind by that appr=ach than by invoking the laws of motion and interfering factors, but the b=tter prediction would be scientifically worthless, whatever utility it mig=t have.

Now consider these ideas. Take =he first. The Big Data approach might provide a tolerable solution t=at wouldn't have the slightest scientific or other interest – that is, giving some understanding of how infants do it. <=>

Take the others. A serious and =eaningful answer would require an understanding of the phenotype =the state attained by the acquisition system. Here there are very significant questions, but like the Hilbert set, theory-internal =nes that can barely be understood outside of the theoretical context in wh=ch they are posed: say, how to incorporate head-movement, with its peculia=ities, within a Merge-based system. And many others like it. That's what I think one would find =hroughout the sciences, with the possible exception of parts of theoretica= physics that verge on mathematics. All throughout the biological sc=ences. And throughout chemistry except maybe in very special corners that are basically part of theoretical physics.

A further problem is that the real task is not to show how a system could acquire some competence in English – which, again, might very superficially be approximated by an intellectually pointless Big Data approach – but how a child can acquire whatever language it is exposed to. That's always been the problem of theoretical linguistics/psycholinguistics. And a very different one, which can't be seriously addressed without UG-considerations.

All requires some more thought, I think.

Noam

From: jeffrey E. [mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 05, 2015 8:20 AM
To: Noam Chomsky <[REDACTED]>

Subject:

noam, as always, spending time. was great/ first draft. of the Chomsky Challenge. 1. Produce a non-living system that can be put into an environment for a while and --- 1. be able to discriminate language from noise. prize a 1 dollar bill signed by Noam and 100k. 2. be able to discriminate coherent sentences from non (we provide 10 test sentences). prize a 10 dollar signed Chomsky bill, and 500k. 3. a language learning module. 20 dollar bill signed and 1 million, 4. a sense making module that can understand meaning inference. etc. the non recommendation recommendation. ie the student has a nice family. etc. a 100 dollar signed bill and 10 million dollars. ? --- If your left leaning, is in conflict with a money prize, we could substitute ---your money goes to charity, - airline tickets to the Gaza strip. - Nicaragua, North Korea, . and 1000 blank protest placards ? or top prize includes 1000 protesters of your choice for three demonstrations :)

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