

The term nativist is derived from the fundamental assertion that language acquisition is innately determined, that we are born with a genetic capacity that predisposes us to a systematic perception of the language around us, resulting in the construction of an internalized system of language. Noam Chomsky claims that children are biologically programmed for language and that language develops in the child in just the same way that other biological functions develop. Once it is activated, the child is able to discover the structure of the language to be learned by matching the innate knowledge of basic grammatical relationships to the structures of the particular language in the environment. The environment makes a basic contribution in this case – the availability of people who speak to the child. The child, or rather, the child's biological endowment, will do the rest.