Two radical positions on language development: naive **nativist** and naive **empiricist**.

What is wrong with each of these?

Wolf children and critical periods

An empiricist model of language: Skinner's: *Verbal Behavior*


What is wrong with a behaviorist theory of language acquisition?

**PROBLEM 1:** It overgeneralized the idea of stimulus control

Skinner Example: You see a painting. You say "Rembrandt".

**PROBLEM 2:** It overgeneralized the idea of reinforcement

**PROBLEM 3:** The contingencies of reinforcement are not correct.

Language as an example of “preparedness”

What does cognitive development study?

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**Animal language**

Animals can communicate

They have **signals**

distinguish between natural animal language and trained animal language.

Animal signals have **meaning**

Do chimps have morphemes or words?

Do animals have syntax?

Is animal language productive (or generative).

Why does this matter?