# Does the submarine swim?\* - 20/03/2018

Let’s see what Noam Chomsky said about one concern in Philosophy of Mind  
today: whether our actions are somehow unconscious or not. Of course, this  
idea evolves defining consciousness as well. Also, a little bit about AI and  
robotics come together.  
  
Answering the question if our mind can be emulated using silicon, Chomsky  
quoted that the mind is just an organized matter, that is, our brain is a  
physical system. However, there are some researchers studying if the voluntary  
actions are sometimes preceded by a preconscious brain´s activity that can  
reach the consciousness or not. Thus, probably we don’t have a right access to  
our introspection as we believe. Following this argument, Chomsky also argued  
that the task of investigating our preconscious decision is a problem that is  
harder than the investigation of the consciousness itself.  
  
On the other hand, artificial intelligence (AI), meaning the way cognitive  
system works, investigates how the things are going on when we decide to do  
this or that and it can contribute to this debate. But, will the robots be  
conscious in the future? Firstly, how we know what the consciousness is and  
how it works? For Chomsky, asking if the machines think is the same as asking  
if submarines can swim. It is a logical question. The serious version of the  
Turing test is to be applied on real scenarios, for example, to know if a  
mathematical proof is correct or not.  
  
So, by the Chomsky analysis we can realize that his vision is near of  
Physicalism although he didn’t give us much information in this short video.  
Moreover, the consciousness is not a mystery for him which indicates the  
irrelevance of this investigation and empathizing the more realistic cases.  
  
   
  
   
  
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[](https://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=6776834719361606300#\_ednref1)\*  
Chomsky short speech: https://youtu.be/0ORHGa-vQp0?t=3