



The language of Humanity

Language, as a biological trait of human beings, was developed in their brain and neurologic framework throughout millennia.

Image 1. The separate morphology in the Neanderthal and Sapiens skulls means quite different speech tracts and, therefore, very different forms of language.

The genetic study on the Neanderthals in the Sidrón Cave, in Piloña (dating back to about 49,000 years ago) uncovered the FOXP2 gene in their genome, a gene which is responsible for language. This fact agrees with their proven ability for **symbolic thought**.

Nevertheless, **the alleged Neanderthal language must have been distinctly different to the current languages spoken by our species**, the *Homo sapiens*. A very important divergence is the very physiology of the vocal tract, different in both species.

Image 2. Recreation of a scene in the daily life of the Neanderthals in the Sidrón cave.

Image 3. Paint strokes in the Sidrón cave, possibly an indication of symbolic thought (and therefore, linguistic ability) in its dwellers. Below, the Sidrón cave (Piloña), one of the main Neanderthal sites.

Image 4. Asturian research team members working in the Sidrón cave.