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Reid's analysis of the origin and subsequent developments of language are given in his *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*. Reid presents an argument for the naturalness or innateness of language that is both profound and interestingly connected to some of Reid's main themes in his philosophy of perception. In the first section of the paper I present Reid's argument for the naturalness of language and attempt to elucidate some of the notions Reid employs in connection with his argument. In the second section I turn to the views of Rom Harre and Daniel N. Robinson. These authors argue that Reid's notion of a natural language is non-linguistic. In particular, Harre and Robinson argue that Reid's notion of the naturalness of language has much more in common with a Wittgensteinian understanding of the origins of language in terms of life forms than with a Fodorian understanding of the origins of language. I argue that according to Reid a natural language is linguistic. In particular, I argue that the only way to defend Harre and Robinson's thesis is to neglect the similarities between Reid's account of language and his account of perception. Given the similarities between the two, the Harre and Robinson thesis is untenable. Hence, Reid's theory of the origins of language is much closer to a Fodorian account than Harre and Robinson would have us believe.

However, a potential motivation for the Harre-Robinson thesis may be to save Reid from the private language argument. Hence, showing that the Harre-Robinson thesis is wrong leaves Reid open to this argument. In the final two sections of the paper I attempt explicitly to make the connection between Reid's account of language and Fodor's account of a language of thought. After drawing this connection I will present Fodor's reasons for thinking that his theory of language does not succumb to the private language argument and point out that the Reidian may adopt the same strategy.

Reid's Argument for the Innateness of Language

The conclusion that Reid hopes to establish is that language is not, contrary to the common opinion 'an invention of men'. Rather he seeks to show that '... there must be a natural language before any artificial language can be invented'.[1] By natural language Reid clearly means a language possessed by all humans, a universal language of sorts, with all the properties sufficient for the development of artificial language. By artificial language Reid simply means what we refer to as natural languages; that is, spoken languages such as English, French and German. The essential feature of an artificial language, as with artificial signs, is that they '... have no meaning, but what is affixed to them by compact or agreement among those who use them ...' (ibid.). The essential feature of natural language is that is has '... previous to all compact or agreement, a meaning which every man understands by the principles of his nature' (ibid.). Thus, communication via language comes in two forms. First, we may communicate our thoughts by natural signs and, second, we may communicate our thoughts by artificial signs.

An important feature of both natural and artificial signs is that both have meaning or more broadly both have an obvious semantic element. As such, assuming that the natural language has more than one sign (and that the various signs can interact) it would seem to follow that the natural language has syntax as well.[2] Hence, both artificial and natural languages have a semantics and syntax.

Reid's argument for the innateness of language proceeds on the (plausible) assumption that artificial language is actual. Given the actuality of artificial language, Reid attempts to show that there is a relation of strict dependence between artificial language and natural language, such that the former strictly depends on the latter. I distinguish strict or strong dependence from simple or weak dependence in the following way:

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[1] References to Reid's *Inquiry* are to Reid, T. (1997). *An Inquiry in the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense* (D. Brookes, Ed.). Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. (Original work published 1764). IV.ii

[2] This would seem to follow if, for example, the natural language has two signs, S and S*, that can interact in various ways (that is, be combined in various ways), where S and S* have different semantic content. S and S* will have, it seems, a structure unique to each and a structure cover their possible combinations, both licit and illicit. This is necessary in order to make sense of the assumption that S and S* have different semantic content.

Simple or Weak Dependence: x is dependent on y iff had y been absent and all other sufficient bases been absent x would have been absent.

Thus, this is not to say that x is possible only if y exists. For x may be actualized if y' exists. Strict dependence can then be rendered as follows:

Strict or Strong Dependence: x is strictly dependent on y iff had y been absent x would have been absent.

Thus, x cannot exist without y. There are no other sufficient bases for x.

Reid maintains that artificial language is strictly dependent on natural language. He states, '… natural language is scanty, compared with artificial; but without the former, we could not possess the latter'.[3] Thus, artificial language cannot exist without natural language.

We are now in a position to present his argument. He writes:

… I think it demonstrable, that if mankind had not a natural language, they could never have invented an artificial one by their reason and ingenuity. For all artificial language supposes some compact or agreement to affix a certain meaning to certain signs; therefore there must be compacts or agreements before the use of artificial signs; but there can be no compact or agreement without signs, nor without language; and therefore there must be a natural language before any artificial language can be invented.[4]

Reid's argument amounts to the following:

1. All artificial language strictly depends on compacts to assign meanings to signs.
2. Hence, compacts are metaphysically and temporally more basic than artificial language.
3. All compacts strictly depend on signs and language.
4. Hence, signs and language are metaphysically and temporally more basic than compacts.
5. Hence, signs and language are metaphysically and temporally more basic than artificial language.

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[3] Ibid., VI.xxiv
[4] Ibid., 51

6. Since there must be signs and language more basic than artificial language, there must be a natural language.

The reasoning behind premise three is straightforward and may be captured with the following *reductio* of the contradictory position (i.e. there is a compact that does not depend on signs and language).

1. Assume that there is a compact that does not depend on signs and language.
2. Artificial language strictly depends on compacts.
3. If artificial language strictly depends on compacts and there is a compact that does not depend on signs and language, then that compact must be artificial as well.
4. But if compacts are artificial, then compacts depend on artificial language and artificial language strictly depends on compacts, which is viciously circular.
5. Hence, it's false that there is a compact that does not depend on signs and language.
6. Hence, all compacts strictly depend on signs and language.

I will not attempt to examine the soundness of the above arguments, since my present interest is in understanding the significance that should be placed on the conclusion of the main argument. What did Reid have in mind when we argued that there must be a natural language, given the presence of an artificial one? In the next section I will present and critique the recent views of Harre and Robinson on the nature of natural language in Reid's thought.

The Similarity between Natural and Artificial Signs

In 'What Makes Language Possible? Ethological Foundationalism in Reid and Wittgenstein',[5] Rom Harre and Daniel N. Robinson seek to establish a similarity in the thought of Wittgenstein and Reid concerning language. As they develop their argument they attempt to establish that the inhomogeneity principle (IP) is applicable to Reid's theory of language. IP states that

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[5] R. Harre, D. Robinson, 'What Makes Language Possible? Ethological Foundationalism in Reid and Wittgenstein', *Review of Metaphysics*, 50:3 (1997), 483–98.

foundations for something of type X are non-X.[6] For example, IP, when applied to epistemology, states that the foundations for justification of belief in some proposition ultimately must end in something non-propositional. IP stops familiar regress problems.[7] These authors believe that Reid (and Wittgenstein) employ something like IP when arguing for the thesis that artificial language cannot depend on artificial language. Hence, as I have characterized things, Reid's attempt to show that artificial language strictly depends on natural language, must be understood, according to Harre and Robinson, as equivalent to saying that artificial language depends on something non-linguistic in character. They write:

> Reid's expression 'natural language' was intended not to convey something 'linguistic' as such but the very scaffolding on which artificial signs could be practically arranged and supported. For Reid, not every natural process is foundational for language. Rather, of the many natural or constitutive features of human creatures, there are some – and only some capable of expressing what Reid called '…the thoughts, purposes, and dispositions of the mind.' To a first approximation he identified '…the features of the face, the modulation of the voice, and the motion and attitude of the body' as among the chief means by which mutual influence and joint action become possible; the means by which the very conventions on which linguistic meaning depends can be brought about.[8]

Thus, the class of artificial signs includes things like words whose meaning is given through compact or agreement, gestures whose meaning is given by compact or agreement and the like. The pivotal question is whether or not in the class of natural signs we find words or anything word-like or only gestures. If IP is to be appropriately applied to Reid's thinking here, then linguistic entities cannot be amongst the natural signs. This is the thesis that Harre and Robinson offer.

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[6] Ibid., 498

[7] Below I seek a motivation for attributing IP to Reid by pointing out that without IP Reid seems to be endorsing a strong private language. The authors take Wittgenstein's private language argument to be sound. Hence, the application of IP safeguards Reid's theory of language from this argument.

[8] Ibid., 498

Reid and IP

Does Reid include linguistic-like entities amongst the class of natural signs? Reid writes, 'It appears evident from what hath been said on the subject of language That there are natural signs, as well as artificial; and particularly, That the thoughts, purposes, and dispositions of the mind, have their natural signs in the features of the face, the modulation of the voice, and the motion and attitude of the body' (*Inquiry*, V.iii). Prima facie, it appears as though Reid does not make room for linguistic-like entities amongst the class of natural signs.[9] Yet this is premature. Reid goes on to suggest that there are three separate types of natural signs. 'The first class of natural signs comprehends those whose connection with the thing signified is established by nature, but discovered only by experience' (ibid). So, the sign and the thing signified are connected by a principle of nature, but we come to know such a connection only by way of experience. For example, smoke is a sign of fire. Yet, the connection between the particular sign (smoke) and the particular thing signified (fire) is not innate. The naturalness of the connection is much more general. A first approximation to the schema of the general connection that is supplied by nature is the following:

> *General Connection Necessary for Particular Connections*: if x is always (or mostly) observed to be conjoined with y, then x is a sign of y.[10]

Seeing smoke conjoined with fire only once is not sufficient to establish this kind of connection. Multiple instances of smoke conjoined with fire would warrant one to take smoke to be a sign of fire. Without the general connection such an inductive procedure could not get going. As such we will call this type of natural sign 'inductive natural signs'.

Inductive natural signs allow for the learning of connections between particular signs and particular things signified. This is to be distinguished from Reid's second class of natural signs. 'A second class is that wherein the connection between the sign and thing signified, is not only established by nature, but discovered to us by a natural principle, without reasoning or experience' (ibid). Reid places within this type ' … the natural signs of human thoughts, purposes, and desires, which have been already mentioned as the natural language of mankind' (ibid). That Reid notes that we can discover

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[9] Hence, Harre's and Robinson's use of this passage of Reid's to defend their claim.

[10] See *Inquiry*, VI.xxiv.

the connection between the sign and the thing signified without reasoning or experience should not be interpreted too rigidly. Rather, he means to contrast this second type with the first type. Thus, where the first type of connection was learned by multiple experiences, this second type is learned or triggered by only one experience. For example, a frown is immediately associated with sadness. All that is required to make this connection is the one experience of frowning.

The connection between the sign and the thing signified in this second class is itself given by nature and hence innate. In contrast to inductive natural signs, where a general connection is natural and particular connections are learned, the second class of natural signs is comprised of particular connections. Thus, this class is much more robust than the first, having as its members each connection between particular sign and particular thing signified, when learning is not involved. Reid writes:

> Our original perceptions, as well as the natural language of human features and gestures, must be resolved into particular principles of the human constitution. Thus, it is by one particular principle of our constitution that certain features express anger; and by another particular principle, that certain features express benevolence. It is in like manner, by one particular principle of our constitution, that a certain sensation signifies hardness in the body which I handle; and it is by another particular principle, that a certain sensation signifies motion in that body (*Inquiry*, VI.xxiv).

We may accordingly call this type of natural sign 'particular natural signs', noting that all of the particular natural connections are found within this type.

The third type of natural sign is a bit more complicated than the first two. It is however, connected to the second type of natural sign. Reid writes, 'A third class of natural signs comprehends those which, though we never before had any notion or conception of the things signified, do suggest it, or conjure it up, as it were, by a natural kind of magic, and at once give us a conception, and create a belief of it' (ibid). Pretty clearly this third type of natural sign is intimately connected with Reid's account of perception. With respect to the latter Reid states, '…that the perception of an object implies both a conception of its form, and a belief of its present existence. I know moreover, that this belief is not the effect of argumentation and reasoning, it is the immediate effect of my constitution' (*Inquiry*, VI.xx). The third type

of natural sign is such that the connection between the sign and the thing
signified is grounded in a natural principle so that when I conceive of the
thing signified I immediately have a belief of it. This is virtually identical to his
formulation of perception and so perhaps the connection between the two is
more than intimate, but rather one of identity.

The distinctive features of particular natural signs are their being rightly
interpreted on the basis of one experience alone and there being numerous
instances of this type. The same can be said with respect to this third class.[11]
What does distinguish them from particular natural signs is that '…we never
before had any notion or conception of the thing signified…' The conception
that is present after the right sort of experience is one that was absent before
the experience. This is not the case with respect to particular natural signs.
For particular natural signs the conception of the thing signified (for example,
sadness) is present before the sign (as in frowning). For the third class the
conception of the thing signified (for example, hardness) is *not* present before
the sign (as in the relevant sensations).

The above-mentioned difference between particular natural signs and the
third class of natural signs, although significant for Reid's realism, should not
overshadow the obvious similarity. Both of these types of natural signs are
such that the sign triggers a conception of and belief in the thing signified. As
such we will call this third type of natural sign 'magical particular natural signs';
noting first that the conceptions gained by this type are distinctly different than
the signs sufficient to yield them and second that they nevertheless belong as a
sub-class of particular natural signs because of the noted similarities.

With respect to the entire class of particular natural signs it is evident that
certain experiences simply trigger an interpretation of signs in such a way that
the interpretation is itself natural. Hence, Reid places meanings of certain
signs squarely within one's natural constitution. That is, one of the principles
of our human constitution is that certain of the meanings of certain signs are
built into our nature. This stands in sharp contrast to the thesis proposed by
Harre and Robinson. IP is applicable to Reid's theory of language, according
to them, precisely because Reid's notion of a natural language is not linguistic
in the way that artificial language is. However, as we have seen Reid places
meanings at the center of his natural sign theory. Meanings are central to
artificial language and so this similarity is sufficient to warrant our calling both
natural and artificial *languages*.

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[11] Reid explicitly places the conception of a mind and hardness within the third class of
natural signs (*Inquiry*, V.iv)

Before turning to a possible motivation for the view of Harre and Robinson it will be instructive to consider one final straw in Reid's own writings that count against the Harre-Robinson thesis. This should also have the added bonus of helping to further clarify any ambiguities remaining from the above discussion.

As we have shown, magical particular natural signs are a sub-class of particular natural signs. What about artificial signs? How are these connected to natural signs? According to Reid, these are strictly dependent on particular natural signs. So, for example, acquired perception is strictly dependent on original perception, where original perception is perhaps located in magical particular natural signs. Thus, IP does not apply to Reid's account of perception. The same reasoning can be appropriated to language. Artificial language is strictly dependent, according to Reid, on natural language such that both share certain properties classifying them as language, but differ with respect to the mode of acquisition.

Reid's own hand makes it clear that just as acquired perception is strictly dependent on and similar to original perception, artificial language is strictly dependent on and similar to natural language. Reid writes, '… both [perception and language] are partly natural and original, partly acquired by custom. Our original or natural perceptions are analogous to the natural language of man to man …' (*Inquiry*, VI.xx). The analogy consists in both possessing signs. Perceptual signs, just as linguistic signs, signify things either by a connection between sign and thing signified that is natural or by a connection that is conventional. Reid writes:

> In the testimony of nature given by the senses, as well as in human testimony given by language, things are signified to us by signs: and in one as well as the other, the mind, either by original principles, or by custom passes from the sign to the conception and belief of the thing signified (*Inquiry*, VI.xxiv).

The analogy between perception and language is so close that if similarities exist between original perception and acquired perception such that both are rightly called perception, the same type of similarity should be found between natural language and artificial language.

Speaking about acquired perception Reid notes that '[t]he connection between the sign, and the thing signified, is established by nature: and we discover this connection by experience; but not without the aid of our original

perceptions, or those which we have already acquired' (ibid). The relevant thing to notice is that in both acquired and original perception there is a connection between sign and thing signified. According to Reid the connection is given by nature. Although with respect to artificial language the connection between sign and thing signified is not given by nature, there is nevertheless the obvious connection. It is simply the connection between sign and thing signified that operates both at the acquired/artificial level and the original/natural level that is enough to show the relevant similarities between each respective level. It is safe to say then that for Reid IP is not applicable either to his theory of perception or to his theory of language.

Reid's Answer to the Private Language Argument

A motivation for the views of Harre and Robinson is not difficult to find. If IP does not apply to Reid's theory of language, then to some degree language is innate. But if language is innate, there can be no way of telling whether or not one is using that language accurately. If there is no way of telling whether or not one is using a language accurately, there can be no meaning in that language. Language is meaningful. Hence, the notion that language is innate is false. Harre and Robinson, effectively blunt the force of this objection by claiming that Reid's theory of language is not committed to the innateness of *language*. Hence, their view that IP is applicable to Reid's theory of language. Given that I have shown that they are mistaken in applying IP to Reid's theory of language the onus is upon me to blunt the force of the conclusion. This is the task to which I now turn.[12]

Fortunately, Reid is not alone in his insistence on a natural (or innate) language. In *The Language of Thought* Fodor gives reasons for why there must be a natural language and he defends these reasons against none other than the private language argument (and other objections as well).[13] Before turning to his defense, and how the Reidian can appropriate it, it will be instructive to see just how close his argument for a language of thought is to Reid's arguments for a natural language.

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[12] I do not mean to suggest that the interpretation of the private language argument presented in this paragraph is the right one or the only one. What I mean to suggest it that the interpretation presented in this paragraph may be the one behind Harre and Robinson's attempt to make Reid more Wittgensteinian than he actually is.

[13] J. Fodor, *The Language of Thought* (Cambridge, MA, 1975).

Fodor systematically argues that if the common or folk psychological theory is at least partially undeniable (and this he thinks is so), then language users must possess an innate language or language of thought (LOT). Let's first look at why Fodor believes that the folk psychological theory is, at least partially, undeniable.

Fodor believes it is self-evident that some of the behavior of S—where S is an organism that thinks—is constituted in part by S's beliefs about its own behavior. He writes, 'I take it to be self-evident that organisms often believe the behavior they produce to be behavior of a certain kind and that it is often part of the explanation of the way that an organism behaves to advert to the beliefs it has about the kind of behavior it produces'.[14] Hence, there is both a first and a third person component to ascriptions of certain kinds of behavior to an organism. If this is so, then, according to Fodor, it follows that the agent has a means of representing his/her behavior to herself. If it did not have such a means of representing, then we must '… give up the possibility of explaining the behavior of the agent by reference to his beliefs and preferences' (31). Hence, in the case of behavior an agent must have a representational system by which he is able to compute over when deciding to perform various actions.

Fodor connects this up with language by noting, '… representation presupposes a medium of representation, and there is no symbolization without symbols. In particular, there is no internal representation without an internal language' (55). Fodor further argues that when learning a language a child must be in possession of something like a language to begin with. He writes, '… we have no notion at all of how a first language might be learned that does not come down to some version of hypothesis formation and confirmation' (58). That is, the learning of a language depends on one's ability to form hypotheses about correct applications of predicates and on their ability to confirm these hypotheses. But, if one must be able to form hypotheses before one is able to learn a first language, one must have an unlearned or innate language. In a footnote Fodor explains it thus:

> There is an analogy between learning a second language on the basis of a first and learning a first language on the basis of an innate endowment. In either case, some previously available representational system must be exploited to formulate the generalizations that structure the system that is being learned. Out of nothing nothing comes.[15]

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[14] Ibid., 28.
[15] Ibid., fn. 4, 59.

We are now in a position to fully state Fodor's argument that there must be an innate language. Since his formulation of the argument is perfectly clear I will quote him at length.

> Learning a language (including, of course, a first language) involves learning what the predicates of the language mean. Learning what the predicates of a language mean involves learning a determination of the extension of these predicates. Learning a determination of the extension of the predicates involves learning that they fall under certain rules (i.e. truth rule). But one cannot learn that P falls under R unless one has a language in which P and R can be represented. So one cannot learn a language unless one has a language. ... But first languages *are* learned. Hence, at least some cognitive operations are carried out in language other than natural languages.[16]

Granting that Fodor is right about what it takes to learn a language, an objector may chime in and reply that it is not the case that learning that P falls under R requires that one has a language in which P and R are represented. At this point we can now see how close Fodor's and Reid's theory of language really are. For, according to Reid, this step in the argument has to be true, else a regress or a vicious circle ensues. That P and R must somehow be represented is undeniable. If they are not represented somehow or other, then they cannot be learned. For, on Fodor's account of things, learning involves hypothesis formation and one cannot form a hypothesis without being able to represent it. On Reid's account of things learning an artificial language involves acceptance, either implicitly or explicitly, of compacts. But one cannot learn a compact unless one already has a language in which that compact can be represented. According to Reid, if one could not represent the compact in some language, then the compact could not be learned. For, the compact itself, like Fodor's first learned language, depends on a prior language. The theories advanced, and the arguments deployed, are similar enough so that problems with one will most likely be problems for the other. As we have seen there is, *prima facie*, a problem, namely, the private language argument. If problems for one are problems for the other, then presumably solutions for one are solutions for the other. Fodor has developed a solution to the private language argument. After laying out his solution I will

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[16] Ibid., 64.

conclude by showing how Reid's own overall progamme fits perfectly with this solution.

Fodor's Formulation and Solution to the Private Language Argument

Fodor states the problem that the private language argument poses for LOT by first noting that coherent use of language is correspondence between S's beliefs and S's words used to express those beliefs. With respect to artificial languages '…this correspondence holds because the speaker knows and adheres to the conventions that govern the language'.[17] Fodor goes on to point out,

> The kind of private language that Wittgenstein envisages departs from this paradigm insofar as the relation between linguistic forms and propositional attitudes is *not* mediated by public conventions. The challenge that the private language argument poses to the notion of a language of thought is, therefore this: Show how such a relation could be mediated by something *other* than public conventions.[18]

In sum there is a relation between language and propositional attitudes that can be accounted for in the case of natural languages. The speaker adopts the conventions. This is straightforward. But what is the relation between language and propositional attitudes when the language is itself innate? Clearly, the speaker cannot choose to adopt the innate language. If the speaker could, then why posit the innate language at all? It is this fact that the speaker cannot adopt LOT – that is in need of explanation.

Fodor first illustrates that on any computational theory there will be causal laws at the base, which explain the behavioral output. In the case of psychological explanations the causal laws at the base[19] of the organism will explain its "cognitive states and, particularly, its propositional attitudes."[20] Fodor then outlines three conditions that bear upon deciding which computational processes are to be ascribed to organisms. For the purpose of deflating the

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[17] Ibid., 72.

[18] Ibid., 73.

[19] The base on Fodor's account is physical. I assume that a Reidian could appropriate much of Fodor's account without forfeiting his dualism.

[20] Ibid., 75.

private language argument the most important condition is the third. 'Finally, and this is the important one, that for any propositional attitude of the organism … there will be a corresponding computational relation between the organism and some formula (e) of the internal code such that (*the organism has the propositional attitude iff the organism is in that relation*) is nomologically necessary' (75). On this characterization the salient difference between adhering to conventions of the natural language and adhering to the private language is that the former is nomologically contingent, whereas the latter is nomologically necessary. With respect to the former, the speaker adheres to the conventions because of place of birth, language taught and so forth. In the case of the latter, the speaker 'adheres' to the private language because she '… is presumably determined by the innate structure of the nervous system'.[21] Both kinds of relations have the characteristic representational element.

In the case of a speaker's adherence to the conventions of some language, Fodor suggests that something like condition C is present.

> *C.* (S uses [a is F] to represent a's being F) just in case ((S believes that a is F just in case S assents to [a is F]) is conventional).

The differences between condition *C* and the condition describing S's use of a private language is (a) 'assent to' is replaced by a sequence of one or more of the basic relations from which computational relations to internal formulae are constructed and (b) 'is conventional' is replaced by 'is nomologically necessary'.[22] That concludes Fodor's way out of the private language argument. It appears that a great deal of work is being done by Fodor's insistence that the private language is nomologically necessary. That is, it is a part of the constitution of the organism. Without such a constitution the organism would not be able to learn a first language.

It should be relatively clear how a Reidian can appropriate Fodor's response to the private language argument. In fact Fodor's response seems to be an instance of Reid's overall programme. We may summarize that overall programme as stating that there are certain principles of human nature such that these principles enable humans to live and know.[23] In other words, humans are so constituted that the deliverances of perception, reason, moral thinking, and so on, generally are correct or correspond to reality. Thus, where common

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[21] Ibid., 78.

[22] Ibid., 78

[23] See Reid's abstract of the *Inquiry*, 257–62.

sense is genuinely threatened, Reid's programme comes to its aid by positing a principle of human constitution. If Fodor and Reid are right in thinking that either we must posit a representational system within agents or do without folk psychology, then, according to Reid, we must posit a representational system. For, doing without folk psychology is as offensive to him as it is to Fodor, and as it is to common sense. Furthermore, such positing is buttressed by Reid's introduction of a principle of the constitution of human nature. Without such a principle, folk psychology and common sense perish. I take it that the relevant principle for Reid is quite similar to the nomologically necessary one posited by Fodor.[24]

Fodor cites as the main difference between a public language and a private one the fact that in the case of the private language the computations over it will be necessitated nomologically by the physical constitution of its nervous system. It is precisely at this point that Reid would introduce a principle of human constitution. Humans are so constituted, according to Reid, that they possess an innate language. We have seen that positing an innate language is necessary in order to vindicate common sense.

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[24] *Inquiry*, 261.