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Fodor's Asymmetric Dependency Theory

Abstract: Fodor's theory of intentionality can be interpreted as consisting of two parts: (1) theory about propositional attitudes and (2) theory of content or meaning. In this paper we will focus mainly on his theory of content, particularly his theory of asymmetric dependence on the problem of disjunction, since it is at the heart of Fodor's theory of representation. Fodor's theory of content is a well-known attempt to naturalize mental representation and one of the most important parts of his theory is the notion of asymmetric dependence. He offers it as a solution to the problem of disjunction. In this context, we will examine his theory of content, and particularly his notion of asymmetric dependence. After summarizing his theory, we will discuss that asymmetric dependence may have some weaknesses that require some revision. Fodor modified his theory considering objections to his earlier work. However, there may still be some problems that he needs to solve. Accordingly, we will identify three important challenges to the theory of asymmetric dependence, namely the problem of unjustified properties, the problem of pathologies, and the problem of wild causation. Finally, we will give some answers to these challenges on behalf of Fodor and discuss that Fodor's theory may overcome all these problems.

Keywords: Fodor, Disjunction Problem, Asymmetric Dependence, Representation, Robustness, Token

Fodor'un Asimetrik Bağımlılık Teorisi

Öz: Fodor'un yönelimsellik teorisi iki bölümden oluştuğu şeklinde yorumlanabilir: (1) önermesel tutumlara ilişkin teori ve (2) içerik veya anlam kuramı. Bu çalışmada esas olarak onun içerik kuramına, özellikle de Fodor'un temsil kuramının kalbinde yer aldığı için ayrışma sorununa ilişkin asimetrik bağımlılık teorisine odaklanacağız. Bilindiği üzere, Fodor'un içerik kuramı zihinsel temsili doğallaştırmaya yönelik iyi bilinen bir girişimdir ve kuramının en önemli parçalarından biri asimetrik bağımlılık kavramıdır. Kendisi bunu ayrışma sorununa bir çözüm olarak sunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, onun içerik kuramını ve özellikle de asimetrik bağımlılık kavramını inceleyeceğiz.

Teorisine deđindikten sonra, asimetrik bađımlılıđın revize edilmesi gereken kimi zayıf yönleri olabileceđini tartışacağız. Fodor'un daha önceki çalışmalarına yapılan itirazları dikkate alarak teorisini modifiye ettiđi bilinmektedir. Ancak yine de çözmesi gereken bazı sorunlar olabilir. Bu dođrultuda, asimetrik bađımlılıđın önündeki üç önemli zorluđu ortaya koyacağız: gerekçelendirilmemiş nitelikler sorunu, patolojiler sorunu ve vahşi nedensellik sorunu. Son olarak bu zorluklara Fodor adına bazı yanıtlar verecek ve Fodor'un teorisinin tüm bu sorunların üstesinden gelebilmesinin mümkün olduğunu tartışacağız.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fodor, Ayrışma Sorunu, Asimetrik Bađımlılık, Temsil, Sađamlık, Sembol

Introduction

In our daily lives, we are constantly thinking about things: our work, other people, love, elm trees, etc. This raises an important problem that philosophers call "the problem of intentionality". How can our beliefs, desires, and thoughts be directed toward objects, even nonexistent ones? As Baker (1989) asks, what causes a given sign to have meaning p? Intentionality is one of the puzzling properties of the human mind. Since Brentano, philosophers have tried to solve the problem: How can purely physical things explain intentional states? In recent years, several well-known intentional realists, especially those influenced by cognitive science, have devoted their energies to developing a naturalized theory of mental representation. Jerry Fodor, the best-known proponent of intentional realism, believes that Brentano was wrong in his assumption that purely physical or material objects cannot have intentional properties. He argues that the intentionality of cognitive computational states and everyday intentional attitudes such as beliefs and desires are natural components of brain states. However, as Aytakin and Sayan (2012) argue, specifying sufficient naturalistic conditions for intentional content is difficult. Fodor's theory of intentionality can be interpreted as consisting of two parts: 1) theory about propositional attitudes, in which they are regarded as attitudes toward propositions of a "language of thought", and 2) theory of content or meaning (Myin 1992). In this paper, we will focus mainly on his theory of content, particularly his theory of asymmetric dependence on the problem of disjunction, since it is at the heart of Fodor's theory of representation. According to asymmetric dependence, an instance of a Y can cause an X-tokening only if there is an independent semantic relation between X's and X-tokenings. And a Y causes an X-tokening depending on

X's cause X-tokenings. However, the cause X-tokenings of X does not depend on the cause X-tokenings of Y. For example, regardless of the actual cause of your token, it represents the property cat if non-cat caused tokens of that type are asymmetrically dependent on cat caused tokens of that type. That is, non-cats would not cause tokens of that type if cats did not; on the other hand, cats would cause tokens of that type even if non-cats did not (Baker 1991). This, in short, is asymmetric dependence. After examining Fodor's asymmetric dependence theory, we will discuss that although Fodor modified his theory several times, it still seems to have some problems. In this context, we will identify three important challenges to asymmetric dependence, namely the problem of unjustified properties, the problem of pathologies, and the problem of wild causation. Finally, we will answer these challenges on behalf of Fodor and discuss that Fodor's theory may overcome all these problems.

1. Some Problems of the Theory

Fodor points out that one facet of the disjunction problem is the phenomenon of misrepresentation. To see this, we must begin with the crude causal theory of content and see how the problem of misrepresentation arises with it. According to the crude causal theory, "the symbol tokenings denote their causes, and the symbol types express the property whose instantiations reliably cause their tokenings" (Fodor 1987: 99). That is, P_s represent S_s if and only if S_s cause P_s . However, this claim leads to the notorious disjunction problem. For example, the perception of a horse can cause the tokening of horse; many other things can also cause horse tokens, such as cows on dark nights. Thus, according to the crude causal theory, cow means cow or horse on a dark night (Fodor 1990b). However, we are not ready to consider horse in a dark night as part of the meaning of cow. Fodor sometimes refers to this phenomenon as the "robustness" of thought. Again, although a thought of a cow can be generated not only by an instantiation of a cow, but also by an instantiation of a horse or something else, we do not want to say that our token

represents a disjunctive property. Indeed, some tokenings of a symbol are misrepresentations and their causes may not be included in the content of the symbol. Thus, Fodor rejects this kind of teleological solution because, in his opinion, it leads to problems of indeterminacy. To illustrate this, he refers to the famous article "*What the Frog's Eye Tells the Frog's Brain*" and states that a frog cannot distinguish whether it has detected a fly or a small black dot. According to Fodor, the process of natural selection cannot make this distinction. As (Myin 1992) addresses, Fodor believes that we encounter massive intentional indeterminacy when we attempt to solve the disjunction problem by appealing to evolutionary considerations. In "*A Theory of Content*", Fodor states, "In the notorious case of frog and beetle, for example, one would think that a good theory of content should decide—and provide reasons for deciding—whether the intentional objects of the frog's snapshots are flies or little black things" (1990c: 106).

In short, Fodor holds that the disjunction problem requires a satisfactory explanation of which tokenings of a symbol are representations and which tokenings of it are misrepresentations. To solve this problem, Fodor offers his asymmetric dependence theory, which is a crucial component of his naturalistic theory of content. His content theory states, briefly, that "X" means X if:

1. 'Xs cause "X"s' is a law.
2. Some "X"s are actually caused by Xs.
3. For all Y not=X, if Ys qua Ys actually cause "X"s, then Ys causing "X"s is asymmetrically dependent on "X"s causing "X"s (Fodor 1990: 121).

Moreover, we must note that Fodor's asymmetric dependency theory is synchronic. That is, it applies to the present and not to a point in time in the past or future. Also, it is worth noting that Adams and Aizawa (1992) add to these three conditions a fourth implicit condition that there are some non-X-caused "X"s. We mention this because we will see later in the paper to what extent they are correct in their claim. The first condition is generally considered to be the least problematic part of Fodor's theory of content. Therefore, we will discuss condition 2 and condition 3. Let us now consider the third condition, where the theory of asymmetric dependence comes

into play. Fodor claims that this theory can overcome the disjunction problem. His own description of the theory is aptly summarised in the following passage:

Cows cause "cow" tokens, and (let's suppose) cats cause "cow" tokens. But "cow" means cow and not cat or cow or cat because there being cat-caused "cow" tokens depends on there being cow-caused "cow" tokens, but not the other way around. "Cow" means cow because, as I shall henceforth put it, non cow-caused "cow" tokens are asymmetrically dependent upon cow-caused "cow" tokens. "Cow" means cow because, but that "cow" tokens carry information about cows, they wouldn't carry information about anything (Fodor 1990b: 91).

Accordingly, (if we return to the horse-cow example) the causal relationship between horses on dark nights and cow tokens is asymmetrically dependent on the cow-cow relationship, but not vice versa. In other words: If mental representations of cows are caused by horses, it is because cows also cause them (Mendola 2003). That is, the former would not exist if the latter did not exist; but the latter can exist without the former. As Myin (1992) points out, Fodor proposes his theory not only to solve the problem of disjunction but also to solve a related problem of the meaning of tokens caused by thought. Myin says:

For it is a mundane matter that 'cow'-thoughts can be caused by 'horse'-thoughts, yet this does not make 'cow'-tokens mean cow or horse-thought. Again, this can be explained by asymmetrical dependence: horse thought caused 'cow'-tokens do not mean horse thought because the relation between horse-thoughts and 'cow' tokens is asymmetrically dependent upon the relation between cows and 'cow-tokens (1992: 112-13).

With these considerations, Fodor seems to have an answer to the problem of disjunction. However, his theory has several problems, and as we mentioned earlier, we will discuss three of them in this essay. So, let us begin with the first one. We know that people can represent not only instantiated properties but also non-instantiated properties like the unicorn using primitive symbols. And it seems obvious that Fodor applied his view to the case of the unicorn. Baker (1991) shows, however, that Fodor's account presents a general dilemma with respect to uninstantiated properties. It is evident that neither the version with actual history nor the version with local-instantiation version allows a primitive symbol of the mental to mean a unicorn. Thus, if Fodor's asymmetric dependence theory is

complete, it must allow primitive symbols to represent uninstantiated properties such as unicorn. Moreover, it must preserve the purely informational interpretation. Let us now look at Baker's unicorn example: "There is as much a nomic relation between S's U-tokens and shunicorns – where a shunicorn is a unicorn look-alike that is really a small zebra with a horn in the middle of the forehead – as there is between S's U-tokens and unicorns. The description of shunicorns is merely a heuristic device; 'shunicorn' is as primitive a term as 'unicorn'" (1991: 20). Since shunicorns are instances of non-unicorns, the asymmetric dependency in this case would have to allow the misrepresentation of a shunicorn as a unicorn. However, this is impossible because there is no basis on which to distinguish the relative distances between worlds in which there are unicorns and worlds in which there are shunicorns. So, we must pretend that they are just as far from our world as other possible worlds. In a word, we have no criteria to distinguish them, because it seems to make no difference whether we imagine a world where unicorns cause U-tokens but shunicorns do not, or vice versa. But it leads to the dilemma that either the asymmetric dependence is absent, and the purely informational version is unable to account for primitive tokens representing uninstantiated properties, or there is a multiplicity of asymmetric dependencies, and we get the contradiction of mutual asymmetric dependence (Baker, 1991). In this case, there seem to be two alternatives. First, we have no principle for asymmetric dependence unless unicorns and shunicorns are instantiated in the real world. Thus, the nomic relation between Shunicorn and U-token is not asymmetrically dependent on the nomic relation between Unicorn and U-token. This is a problem for Fodor's theory, because none of the three conditions above can explain why a subject's U-tokens represent a unicorn, or similar uninstantiated properties. Second, we get a contradiction if we agree with Fodor's discourse on asymmetric dependence (*ibid*). Fodor says:

It can be true that the property of being a unicorn is nomologically linked with the property of being a cause of unicorn-tokens even if there are not unicorns". Then he states: "Maybe this cashes out into something like "there would not be nonunicorn-caused 'unicorn' tokens but that unicorns would cause 'unicorn' tokens if there were any unicorns. And maybe that cashes out into something like this: there are non-

unicorn-caused 'unicorn' tokens only in nearby worlds in which there are unicorn-caused 'unicorn' tokens. But I am not an enthusiast for such translations (1990: 46).

In summary, Baker's shunicorn example implies an important problem for asymmetric dependence, since Fodor also admits that he is not satisfied with his own explanation. He is not satisfied because he knows that if the condition of asymmetric dependence is satisfied in the case of the unicorn, it must also be satisfied in the case of the shunicorn. In this case, there is a contradiction or disjunction and a clear counterexample for the analysis. On the other hand, if the unicorn case does not satisfy the condition of asymmetric dependence, the reduction cannot overcome the unjustified properties in general, and we encounter a serious gap. In both cases, the reduction for unicorns fails (Baker 1991). Second, we will discuss the problem of pathologies in relation to Fodor's theory of asymmetric dependence. The third condition of Fodor's theory states that not only some of the connections between Ys and "X"s depend on the connection between Xs and "X" s. It says that all the connections between Ys and "X"s depend on the connection between Xs and "X" s. To give an example: Not only does the horse-cow connection depend asymmetrically on the cow-cow connection, but all other connections such as milk-cow, Hindu-cow, steak-cow, etc. depend on the cow-cow connection. This is quite a strong assertion. The problem of pathologies, however, counters this view, for there is good reason to believe that not all Y- "X" connections depend on X- "X" connection. For example, as Adams and Aizawa (1993) point out, our "X" token could be caused by abnormal situations such as injury, disease, or certain forms of experimental intervention. Now suppose that our cow-"cow" connection is instantiated by some instances. Then the first and second conditions of Fodor's theory would be satisfied. Myriads of things can cause "cow" signs, such as seeing a Hindu, drinking milk, eating a steak, etc., because they all depend on the nomic cow-"cow" connection. However, Adams and Aizawa show that:

Despite the fact that conditions (1) and (2) are in force and the asymmetric dependency does hold for some Ys, it seems reasonable to suppose that one or more microelectrodes implanted in the person's brain and fired in just the right sequence might initiate the pattern of electrical activity in a set of neurons in the person's brain

that is constitutive of the syntactic type "cow" in the person and that this power of the microelectrodes does not depend on the power of cows. Perhaps a blow to the head might also set off the activity constitutive of "cow", but its power too would seem not to be dependent on the power of cows. Hallucinatory drugs, a type of brain tumor, or a chemical imbalance would also seem to be similar in this respect (1993: 99).

In a word, it seems that Fodor is wrong in his claim that all Y- "X" connections depend on X- "X" connections. Of course, someone may still claim that all these pathological cases also depend on the cow-"cow" connection. However, there seems to be no concrete evidence to support this claim, so it needs further investigation. Finally, it is time to examine the third and (for me) most remarkable problem of Fodor's theory of asymmetric dependence. It is worth noting that this is related to the problem of pathologies that we have been discussing. Anthony and Levine (1991) argue that cows-on-dark-nights can cause horse tokens because they share some properties with horses, some properties of their visual appearance, such as being four-legged. Therefore, it is plausible to claim that both horses and cows-on-dark-nights project the same patterns of light onto the retinas of people. Although these types of situations are very common, Fodor does not seem to pay attention to this phenomenon. For example, a lay figure can evoke a human token, a fire engine on a dark night can cause an ambulance token, a cilantro flower can cause a parsley token, etc. What all these examples have in common is that they have similar properties. Thus, it is clear from these examples that some false tokens of a symbol are caused by instantiations of properties denoted by that symbol.

On the other hand, Fodor (1990b) also points to other kinds of examples covering disjunction problems. Accordingly, not only horses but also milk can cause cow tokens, and there is obviously a nomic connection between milk and cow. In this case, if we consider the crude causal theory, cow should mean cow or milk. However, this leads to the problem of disjunction. Aytekin and Sayan (2010) point out that Fodor makes a mistake when he treats both types of nomic compounds as the same. For Fodor, there is no fundamental difference between the causation between cow tokens by means of milk and the causation between cow tokens by

means of horses. Therefore, he believes that his theory of asymmetric dependence can be applied to both cases. However, there is an obvious difference between milk as the cause of cow tokens and horse as the cause of cow tokens. While there is no common property between milk and cows, horses and cows have common properties, such as being four-legged, having a similar size, having a tail, and so on. Because of these common characteristics, horses sometimes cause cow tokens. On the other hand, this is not the case for milk since milk does not cause cow tokens due to its common properties. Therefore, Aytekin and Sayan (2010) argue that there must be a completely different assertion to explain the causation of cow tokens by milk and to find a solution to the disjunction problem that this creates. Following Fodor, they mention two types of causes for symbols: wild causes and meaning-forming causes. In this context, wild causes are the causes of a symbol that are not expressed by that symbol. Meaning-forming causes, on the other hand, are the causes of a symbol that are expressed by that symbol. Consequently, there are three types of causes to consider:

- Type 1: Meaning-forming causes of a symbol which lead to true tokens.
E.g., causation of "cow" tokens by cows.
- Type 2: Meaning-forming causes of a symbol which lead to false tokens.
E.g., causation of "cow" tokens by horses.
- Type 3: Wild causes of a symbol.
E.g., causation of "cow" tokens by milk. (Ibid: 24)

Let us now examine why Fodor's account does not work out for the wild causes. Imagine a situation in which a cow token is caused by a Hindu. In this case, let the meaning of "Hindu" be excluded from the meaning of "cow" by showing that the Hindu-cow connection is asymmetrically dependent on the cow-cow connection. According to the third condition of Fodor's theory of content, if we break the nomic connection between "cow" and "cow", the connection between "Hindu" and "cow" would also have to be broken. However, since there are no common properties between Hindu and cow, they cannot affect each other by breaking any of their nomic connection. So, if we somehow break the connection between cows and "cow" tokens, that does not break the connection between Hindu and "cow" tokens. So, we

cannot say that the Hindu-cow connection depends asymmetrically on the cow-cow connection. For example, a Pakistani wearing traditional Hindu clothing can cause cow tokens. Thus, the Pakistani-cow connection would be asymmetrically dependent on the Hindu-cow connection. In this case, "Hindu" must be included in the meaning of "cow". Thus, cow would mean either "cow" or "Hindu", which is not accepted by Fodor's theory of content. In summary, both the causation of the token "cow" by horses and by "Hindu" are accepted by Fodor as wild causes. But as we have seen, they should not be placed in the same category. While horses cause cow tokens because of their similar appearance, Hindu cow tokens do not. Therefore, Fodor must find a way to interpret them separately.

In summary, we have discussed three different problems related to Fodor's theory of asymmetric dependence. First, we have seen that uninstantiated properties such as unicorns create a general dilemma for asymmetric dependence. Second, contrary to Fodor's account, the problem of pathologies shows that it is not necessary that all Ys-"X"s connections depend on the connection between X-"X". Third, Fodor's theory seems insufficient to deal with both wild and meaning-forming causes. Therefore, they must be treated separately. In summary, while Fodor's theory of content is considered the strongest attempt to naturalize mental representation, some parts of it seem problematic.

2. Possible Answers to the Related Problems

We will now present some possible rebuttals to these problems on behalf of Fodor. If the rebuttals we are going to discuss are plausible, then Fodor's theory can be salvaged. Let us start with the problem of uninstantiated properties. How can Fodor's theory be applied to uninstantiated things? Fodor's own answer to this problem is that unicorns and all other uninstantiated properties are non-primitive. In this respect, 'unicorn' would be a definite term instead of a primitive term. Accordingly, unicorn is a complex term consisting of the primitive parts: horn and horse. Thus, treating the unicorn as a non-primitive term would allow us to

instantiate it. Baker (1991) argues that this kind of solution seems reasonable enough; however, it causes another problem. He imagines a twin Earth where there are unicorns. In this case, you and your doppelganger would have the same syntactic symbol 'unicorn'. But your doppelganger's symbol might be semantically primitive, while yours is not. According to Baker, this is a problem because the same symbol cannot have different semantic properties. However, a proponent of Fodor's theory would argue that a symbol can have more than one semantic property, since Fodor's theory shows that the meaning of a symbol depends on its syntax. That is, you and your doppelganger can have the same syntactic symbol 'unicorn' with different semantic properties.

This kind of solution seems plausible, because if we did not see a horse with a horn in life, it would not be possible to imagine a unicorn. So, the unicorn is a product of the human brain, which consists of a horse and a horn. Then we can treat them separately as horse and horn. Similarly, we need to decompose some properties that are nomically impossible, such as the round square. For example, if we try to imagine a round square, we inevitably picture round and square one by one. So, it is conceivable that we apply the same to the case of the unicorn. In short, the uninstantiated properties do not seem to pose much of a problem for Fodor's theory. Second, let us discuss the problem of pathologies. According to the pathology argument, the claim that "all connections between Ys and "X"s depend on the connection between Xs and "X"s" is false because there are counterexamples. For example, Adams and Aizawa (1993) point out that our cow token could be caused by abnormal situations such as injury, disease, or drugs. Therefore, Fodor is wrong in his claim that all Y-"X" connections depend on X-"X" connections. However, this argument does not seem strong enough to us. Even if we accept the claim that our cow token could be triggered by several abnormal causes, this does not mean that Fodor is wrong in his argument. We can still claim that all these pathological cases also depend on our cows-"cow" connection, since they are all pseudo-causes. In other words, they can only be secondary causes. A hallucinatory drug can trigger our

cow token, but the real cause of our token would still be the cow-cow connection. We will try to support our claim with another example. According to the ability hypothesis, when Mary is released from her black and white room and sees the red tomato for the first time, she acquires the abilities to remember, imagine, and recognize (Lewis 1990). That is, without knowing what an experience looks like, it is not possible to imagine, remember, or recognize that experience. Similarly, it can be claimed that our cow token cannot be caused by any pathological cases without knowing what it is like to see a cow. That is to say, the cow- cow connection seems to be essential for our cow token. Even if we theoretically knew everything about cows by reading books or listening to experts, it would not be possible to imagine exactly what a cow looks like without seeing a cow.

Some cite non-existent objects such as unicorns as a counterexample and ask: How can we imagine non-existent objects such as unicorns? The answer to this question is hidden in the preceding pages. As we mentioned earlier, a unicorn is a compound of a horse and a horn. Therefore, if we did not know what horse and horn look like, we could not imagine a "unicorn". Thus, this objection does not seem to pose much of a threat to Fodor's theory.

Finally, we will state the wild cause objection to Fodor's asymmetric dependence theory. Let us briefly recall this criticism. According to this objection, Fodor fails to explain both kinds of nomic connections with the same theory. For example, he sees no fundamental difference between the milk-cow connection and the horse-cow connection and believes that his asymmetric dependence theory can be applied to both cases. On the other hand, some argue that there is a major difference between the milk-cow connection and the horse-cow connection. Namely, there is no common property of milk and cow in terms of their appearance. However, horses and cows have similar characteristics, such as being animal-like, being four-legged, etc. Because of these common properties, horses sometimes cause cow tokens, but we cannot say the same for milk because milk does not cause cow tokens due to its similarity to cows. Therefore, Fodor's asymmetric dependence

theory cannot be applied to both cases. Accordingly, Aytekin and Sayan (2010) suggest that there must be an entirely different explanation for the causation of cow tokens by milk to find a solution to the disjunction problem this creates.

Although we partially agree with this objection, we do not believe that it is necessary to find a completely different solution to the wild causes. We disagree with Aytekin and Sayan's claim that "milk and cows have no causally relevant common properties...thus, the milk-cow connection does not asymmetrically depend on the cow-cow connection" (2010: 30). It is true that milk and cows do not have a common characteristic in terms of their physical appearance; but they have a historical relevance. This is the reason why an agent can have a cow thought when he drinks milk. If there were no cows, we would not know what milk is, at least cow's milk. In this case, milk would not cause our cow token. Similarly, there is a historical relationship between Hindus and cows. We know that cows have spiritual significance for a Hindu. That is, it is perfectly normal to think of a cow when we see a Hindu. Therefore, there is no major difference between milk- cow connection and horse-cow connection. While the former causes our cow token because of its historical relevance, the latter causes our cow token by its similar appearance. Nevertheless, both milk and horse share the common characteristic of being somehow related to cows. Having similar internal properties with cows is not the only condition for the causation of our cow token. An external property can also be sufficient for the same thing. Therefore, Fodor's claim that there is no fundamental difference between the causation of cow tokens by milk and the causation of cow tokens by horses seems quite plausible.

As a possible objection, however, it could be argued that even a completely unrelated thing, such as a car, can cause our cow's token. If this is true, our claim can be questioned. However, we contend that if something causes our cow token, it must have something to do with cows in some way, even if it looks like it has nothing to do with them. Let us explain our claim with an example. Let us take the case that a car caused our cow token. If this is the case, there should be a certain connection

between cars and cows for us. For example, we may have a memory of cars and cows if we trampled a cow as a child. Therefore, a car can cause our cow token. This kind of relevance is extraordinary because there is no relationship between cars and cows for other people.

Conclusion

In summary, we have seen that anything can cause our cow token if it is related to cows in some way. This means that all connections between Ys and "X"s depend on the connection between Xs and "X"s. Thus, contrary to the argument of Aytekin and Sayan (2010), it can be claimed that milk and cows share a (causally relevant) common property. Therefore, Fodor's claim that the milk-cow connection is asymmetrically dependent on the cow-cow connection seems plausible. If so, the third condition of asymmetric dependence, that "for all $Y \neq X$, if Ys qua Ys actually causes "X"s, then Ys causing "X"s is asymmetrically dependent on Xs causing "X"s," can be salvaged. Finally, we discussed Fodor's theory of asymmetric dependence and three important objections to it, namely, the problem of uninstantiated properties, the problem of pathologies, and the wild cause problem. We then argued that these objections were not strong enough. If our refutations are conceivable, there seems to be no fundamental problem for Fodor's theory.

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