= A) and the false ones (A =
A or B) . The first can subsist independently of the second , but the second can occur only because of the existence of the first :
From the point of view of semantics , errors must be accidents : if in the extension of " horse " there are no cows , then it cannot be required for the meaning of " horse " that cows be called horses . On the other hand , if " horse " did not mean that which it means , and if it were an error for horses , it would never be possible for a cow to be called " horse . " Putting the two things together , it can be seen that the possibility of falsely saying " this is a horse " presupposes the existence of a semantic basis for saying it truly , but not vice versa . If we put this in terms of the crude causal theory , the fact that cows cause one to say " horse " depends on the fact that horses cause one to say " horse " ; but the fact that horses cause one to say " horse " does not depend on the fact that cows cause one to say " horse " ... "

= = Functionalism = =

During the 1960s , various philosophers such as Donald Davidson , Hilary Putnam , and Fodor tried to resolve the puzzle of developing a way to preserve the explanatory efficacy of mental causation and so @-@ called " folk psychology " while adhering to a materialist vision of the world which did not violate the " generality of physics " . Their proposal was , first of all , to reject the then @-@ dominant theories in philosophy of mind : behaviorism and the type identity theory . The problem with logical behaviorism was that it failed to account for causation between mental states and such causation seems to be essential to psychological explanation , especially if one considers that behavior is not an effect of a single mental event / cause but is rather the effect of a chain of mental events / causes . The type @-@ identity theory , on the other hand , failed to explain the fact that radically different physical systems can find themselves in the identical mental state . Besides being deeply anthropocentric (why should humans be the only thinking organisms in the universe ?) , the identity @-@ type theory also failed to deal with accumulating evidence in the neurosciences that every single human brain is different from all the others . Hence , the impossibility of referring to common mental states in different physical systems manifests itself not only between different species but also between organisms of the same species .
One can solve these problems , according to Fodor , with functionalism , a hypothesis which was designed to overcome the failings of both dualism and reductionism . What is important is the function of a mental state regardless of the physical substrate which implements it . The foundation for this view lies in the principle of the multiple realizability of the mental . Under this view , for example , I and a computer can both instantiate (" realize ") the same functional state though we are made of completely different material stuff (see graphic at right) . On this basis functionalism can be classified as a form of token materialism .

= = Evolution = =

Fodor has co @-@ written a book with the biolinguist Massimo Piattelli @-@ Palmarini called What Darwin Got Wrong (2010) which describes neo @-@ Darwinists as being " distressingly uncritical " and says of Darwin 's theory of evolution that " it overestimates the contribution the environment makes in shaping the phenotype of a species and correspondingly underestimates the effects of endogenous variables . " Evolutionary biologist Jerry Coyne describes this book as " a profoundly misguided critique of natural selection " and " as biologically uninformed as it is strident . " Moral philosopher and anti @-@ scientism author Mary Midgley praises What Darwin Got Wrong as " an overdue and valuable onslaught on neo @-@ Darwinist simplicities " . The book also received positive review by mathematician and Intelligent Design Theorist William Dembski .

= = Criticism = =

A wide variety of philosophers of diverse orientations have challenged many of Fodor 's ideas . For

example , the language of thought hypothesis has been accused of either falling prey to an infinite regress or of being superfluous . Specifically , Simon Blackburn suggested in an article in 1984 that since Fodor explains the learning of natural languages as a process of formation and confirmation of hypotheses in the LOT , this leaves him open to the question of why the LOT itself should not be considered as just such a language which requires yet another and more fundamental representational substrate in which to form and confirm hypotheses so that the LOT itself can be learned . If natural language learning requires some representational substrate (the LOT) in order for it to be learned , why shouldn 't the same be said for the LOT itself and then for the representational substrate of this representational substrate and so on , ad infinitum ? On the other hand , if such a representational substrate is not required for the LOT , then why should it be required for the learning of natural languages ? In this case , the LOT would be superfluous . Fodor , in response , argues that the LOT is unique in that it does not have to be learned via an antecedent language because it is innate .

In 1981 Daniel Dennett had formulated another argument against the LOT . Dennett suggested that it would seem , on the basis of the evidence of our behavior toward computers but also with regard to some of our own unconscious behavior , that explicit representation is not necessary for the explanation of propositional attitudes . During a game of chess with a computer program , we often attribute such attitudes to the computer , saying such things as " It thinks that the queen should be moved to the left " . We attribute propositional attitudes to the computer and this helps us to explain and predict its behavior in various contexts . Yet no one would suggest that the computer is actually thinking or believing somewhere inside its circuits the equivalent of the propositional attitude " I believe I can kick this guy 's butt " in Mentalese . The same is obviously true , suggests Dennett , of many of our everyday automatic behaviors such as " desiring to breathe clear air " in a stuffy environment .

Some linguists and philosophers of language have criticized Fodor 's self @-@ proclaimed " extreme " concept nativism . Kent Bach , for example , takes Fodor to task for his criticisms of lexical semantics and polysemy . Fodor claims that there is no lexical structure to such verbs as " keep " , " get " , " make " and " put " . He suggests that , alternatively , " keep " simply expresses the concept KEEP (Fodor capitalizes concepts to distinguish them from properties , names or other such entities) . If there is a straightforward one @-@ to @-@ one mapping between individual words and concepts , " keep your clothes on " , " keep your receipt " and " keep washing your hands " will all share the same concept of KEEP under Fodor 's theory . This concept presumably locks on to the unique external property of keeping . But , if this is true , then RETAIN must pick out a different property in RETAIN YOUR RECEIPT , since one can 't retain one 's clothes on or retain washing one 's hands . Fodor 's theory also has a problem explaining how the concept FAST contributes , differently , to the contents of FAST CAR , FAST DRIVER , FAST TRACK , and FAST TIME . Whether or not the differing interpretations of " fast " in these sentences are specified in the semantics of English , or are the result of pragmatic inference , is a matter of debate . Fodor 's own response to this kind of criticism is expressed bluntly in Concepts : " People sometimes used to say that exist must be ambiguous because look at the difference between ' chairs exist ' and ' numbers exist ' . A familiar reply goes : the difference between the existence of chairs and the existence of numbers seems , on reflection , strikingly like the difference between numbers and chairs . Since you have the latter to explain the former , you don 't also need ' exist ' to be polysemic . "

Some critics find it difficult to accept Fodor 's insistence that a large , perhaps implausible , number of concepts are primitive and undefinable . For example , Fodor considers such concepts as EFFECT , ISLAND , TRAPEZOID , and WEEK to be all primitive , innate and unanalyzable because they all fall into the category of what he calls " lexical concepts " (those for which our language has a single word) . Against this view , Bach argues that the concept VIXEN is almost certainly composed out of the concepts FEMALE and FOX , BACHELOR out of SINGLE and MALE , and so on .

= = Books = =

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