
Ilija Barukčić
Causality.
New Statistical Methods.
ISBN 3-8334-3645-X
Discussion with the reader.

Subject: Karl Popper - The principle of falsifiability

Jack Himelright wrote:

I read an essay of yours, and there are two points which I feel essential to raise. The essay is here: http://www2.uni-jena.de/svw/metheval/projekte/symposium2006/material/poster_barukcic_causation_and_the_law_of_independence.pdf

1) While your work seems to have importance in statistical theory, I am skeptical of the claim that your sense of causation is necessarily equivalent to the sense that it is commonly understood, much as random in the colloquial and statistical senses are quite distinct from one another. Further, you admit that your theory is only sufficient to designate absence of causation, not to prove causation's presence. Have you developed a rigorous method for demonstrating the latter?

2) Statistical and probability theory can, at best, provide only instantaneous conclusions, if you will: it is only so valid as are its assumptions, and this would have to conclude constancy in the population in question, or at least a predictable nature. However, in order to assume this, one also make the further assumption that there are regular harmonies in nature. Such a proposition direct leads back to the problem of induction as proposed by Hume, and I have yet to find Popper's principle of falsifiability to be truly satisfactory.

From: Jack Himelright <insertrandomusername@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: Causality vs. Correlation
To: Ilija Barukcic <Barukcic@t-online.de>
Date: Fri, 26 May 2006 23:43:32 -0700 (PDT)

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Answer

Hi Jack,

to some extent you are right.

If you mean that Hume's view of causation is the common opinion of causation, then you are not absolutely incorrect. Hume's regularity theory of causation is still dominant in discussions about causation, but things are changing. Only, taking Hume for granted, there is no causation at all.

Let us assume Hume is right, the cause precedes its effect in time. What could this mean? In so far, according to Hume, there is a period of time, where we have a cause, but we do not have an effect. Hey, how this? The duty of a cause is to have an effect or not, but according to Hume, at this period of time, where the cause precedes its effect, we have a cause that has not produced an effect. In other words, according to Hume, we have a cause, that is not a cause, this cause has not produced an effect. How can a cause be a cause without being able to produce an effect? Taking Hume for granted, we arrived at a logical contradiction. According to Hume, **the cause is and is not** and both is true at the same period of time. Firstly. The cause precedes the effect, thus according to Hume, besides of all the cause is a cause. Secondly. At this period of time, this cause does not produce an effect, thus this cause is not a cause. According to Hume, to say it more logically, it has to be that **C And (Not C) = 1**. This simple Reductio ad absurdum argues Hume's claims, that a cause has to precedes its effect in time. Further, it is known, that Hume's regularity theory of causation is not compatible with quantum mechanics too. This theory is proofed as valid in physics and cannot be ignored by philosophers. At the end, Hume's theory of causation is based on a logical fallacy, the so called "post hoc, ergo propter hoc" fallacy or in other words, after this, therefore because of this.

Example.

Please smile at a girl and do nothing more.
Let this girl get a baby 9 month after your smile.
According to Hume,
you are the father of this baby,
the girl got a baby after your smile and thus because of your smile.

This is of course wrong and has nothing to do with causation.

The day comes after the night, thus according to Hume,
the day is the cause of the night.
This is of course wrong.
and so on, and so on ...

Hume's work is important, but not for causation.

His work is important but only for (time) series.

Please let me admit once again, to some extent, you are right.

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My essay you read is only one small step to solve the mathematical problem of causation, a small brick out of a great dark wall is taken away, thus that the light can come in. But with this essay nothing is solved. This is only a small contribution on the way to solve the mathematical problem of causality. In so far, if you want to solve the mathematical problem of causation, then you will have to consider the law of independence, otherwise you will fail. This is proofed by me and valid. On the other hand, the law of independence is not identical with causation as such, this is correct.

Indeed, I have developed a method to prove causation's presence. Please, take a look at my web page

<http://www.causation.de/> -> Causality

press causality and
download the contents of my book,
Causality. New Statistical Methods.
sec. Edition 2006.

There, you can find more.

But at the end, I am bound to say, that you are wrong to some extent.

The reality as such has not to fit Popper's principle of ... or statistical and probability theory of ... etc. , no, no, not at all. A theory has to fit the reality.

Statistical and probability theories depend to a great extent upon historical circumstances and are improving by time. Things that were impossible 300 years before are today possible etc.

If the statistical and probability theories **of today** would only be able to provide instantaneous conclusions, if they would be only so valid as are its assumptions etc. then ... may be you are right.

But your starting point is incorrect. You have to take the world like it is, and this world is moving and changing all the time and everywhere around us. In so far, if Einstein is right then there are only few "things" in our world that are really constant. Firstly, the speed of the light and secondly, the alteration as such or the fact that the things will change.

Thus, indeed, a theory that needs a constancy in the population in question, f. e. **Pearl's do - operator** is only of a very limited value when solving problems of causation. How can you assure absolutely the same conditions in a population or in a world that is changing all the time? You are presupposing "things" that cannot be fulfilled. A theory of causation that is based on such a proposition can not fit the reality. Causation as such has to do with changes. A mathematical apparatus that claims to have solve the problem of causality can not have any problems with this fact.

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Sir Karl Popper

(1902 - 1994)

Karl Popper is a dedicated opponent of Hegel and Marx. His own view of science (*Logik der Forschung* 1934) and his intellectual influence is historically backgrounded. Karl Popper's teenage flirtation with Stalinist-Marxism, the doctrinaire and totalitarian character of the latter, highly influenced his philosophical point of view.

Leninist-Marxism or Stalinist-Marxism and other etc. claimed to be highly scientific but degenerated meanwhile into pseudo-scientific dogma, so far I think Popper is right. Popper opposed totalitarianism (Leninism, Stalinism etc.) and at the end Marxist account of history too.

Karl Popper in his goal to defeat Marxism asked him self, is there a criterion for demarcating science from non-science. How can we draw a line between science and non-science, is there something like a pure science, science free of dogma, science free of ideology, science free of interests etc.?

Karl Popper - The principle of falsifiability

Karl Popper, a dedicated opponent of science, tried to establish his principle of falsifiability as the criterion to distinguish between non-science from science. According to Popper a theory is scientific, if it is incompatible with possible empirical observations otherwise not. A theory which is compatible with all such observations, is unscientific.

But Theories may be unscientific today (because they are unfalsifiable according to Popper) and later at a given time may become falsifiable because of the development of technology etc. and thus scientific.

In this sense, the same theory (without any changes of the theory itself) is according to Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability **scientific and unscientific** and both is true!

Karl Popper may accept this logic, I certainly do not!

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The unscientific and doctrinaire character of Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability is more than evident. Popper's principle of falsifiability doesn't guarantee anything. A theory can but must not be tossed out because of a falsification. It is true that we should pay close attention to claimed results, positive or negative one. Claimed falsifications are not all the time automatically and necessarily real.

Karl Popper - The principle of scientific intolerance

The distinguishing between science and in terms of Karl Popper 'non-science' presupposes that there is something like a pure science, the science as such, a science free of contradictions, a science free of ideology, a science free of power etc. Where is this pure science? Who is financing this pure science? Who is paying the current for the rooms where this pure science is "produced"? Who is paying the scientist?

I Germany we say, "Wes Brot ich es, des Lied ich sing" or to say it in broken English, who pays, commands!

A science is never absolutely pure and absolutely free. Science depends more or less upon the historical circumstances too.

Karl Popper's view of the pure and true "science" is based on the exclusion of the other of pure science, the "non-science", out of the "pure science" as such. By doing this, "the pure and true science" makes itself into its own opposite, Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability degenerates as such into a pseudo-scientific dogma, Popper himself passes over into a dogmatic totalitarian, into his own opposite, into an antiscientific crusaders against tolerance in science and tolerance as such, into a dangerous man.

The act of distinguishing between science and "non-science" is a weapon in antiscientific hands, is an act of intolerance of one against the other, I am scientific, you are unscientific. This Popper induced dogmatic "scientific war-fare" has damaged the image of science at a maximum.

But the most important thing is, that Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability do not offer itself up to a potential refutation, it is itself not falsifiable. This is highly unscientific according to Karl Popper's own rules.

This Reductio ad absurdum argues any relevance of Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability.

We the people have the right to make failure, to try and fail, and to learn out of this, may Popper love this or not.
His principle of falsifiability is highly antiscientific and inhuman.

Ilija Barukčić, Jever, Germany.
31.05.06

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