

SEMIOTICS

FALL SEMESTER 2007



Christen Købke: *Studie af skyer over havet*.
1840-1845. Olie på papir på lærred. 15x21,5 cm

Center for Semiotics

UNIVERSITY OF AARHUS

Seminar on Cognitive Semantics

Svend Østergaard | Tuesdays in seminar weeks, 12:00 - 14:00. Building 1.455, room 127

The course in cognitive linguistics is concerned with four issues. 1) What are the structures of meaning? This problem is treated by means of frame semantics, schemas, and blending theory, amongst other things. 2) How are sentences composed into a meaningful whole? This is the problem of syntax and we find one possible answer to the question in construction grammar. 3) What do we do with language? This concerns the functional and social aspect of language. 4) How is language connected to other cognitive functions such as memory, perception, pattern recognition etc?

These questions are mainly treated from the perspective of cognitive linguistics and key authors are, among others, George Lakoff, Len Talmy, William Croft, Adele Goldberg, René Dirven, Michael Tomasello and Mark Turner. The text books we use in the course are F. Ungerer & H.J. Schmid: *An introduction to cognitive linguistics*, D. Geeraerts (ed.): *Cognitive Linguistics. Basic Readings* and R. Dirven & M. Verspoor: *Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics*. The last reference is available on the net.

Seminar on Cognition and Semiotics

Peer Bundgård | Wednesdays in seminar weeks, 12:00 - 14:00. Building 1.467, room 415

The course on semiotics and cognition introduces to the basic concepts of cognitive semiotics: metaphor, blending, frame, schema, conceptual structure and generally the relation between perception, conceptualization and linguistic expression. It aims at characterizing human meaning construction as it goes on in plain experience and is it is articulated in language. Key authors are, among others, George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Len Talmy, Jean Petitot, Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner.

The following books are indispensable:

- Dirk Geeraerts (ed.), *Cognitive Linguistics: Basic Readings*, Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006.
- George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, The University of Chicago Press, 1980
- George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, Basic Books, 1999.
- Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind*, The University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- F. Ungerer & H.J. Schmid: *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics*, Longman

A Danish translation of many of the texts below can be found in: P. Bundgård et al. (ed.), *Kognitiv Semiotik*, København: Haase & Søn, 2003. Recommended literature:

- 1 Andrew Ortony (ed.), *Metaphor and Thought*, Cambridge University Press.
- 2 George Lakoff, *Women Fire and Dangerous Things*, The University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- 3 Gilles Fauconnier & Mark Turner, *The Way We Think*, New York, Basic Books, 2002.
- 4 Gilles Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- 5 Beate Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005

Sep 12: Introduction to the course: *Mind, World, and Language*

This introduction as well as the whole course are intended to outline what cognitive semiotics is about, what theory of consciousness it rests on, how it characterizes the relation between cognition and experience or the relation between language and perception, in short: it is supposed to provide you with a general idea about this field of research and introduce you to a series of topics we will be analyzing more thoroughly during the course. A key concept here, as well as in the whole course, is the concept of schema, which will be minutely commented on in several of its clothings. A proper understanding of the mind's relation to the world takes a proper understanding of the concept of "schema", its function and its origin.

Sep 26: *Frame Semantics*

Charles Fillmore: "Frame Semantics", in Geeraerts, *Cognitive Linguistics: Basic readings*: 373-400.

Other relevant literature:

- 1 P.F. Bundgaard, "Principles of linguistic composition below and beyond the clause", *Pragmatics & Cognition*, 14/3, 2006: 501-526 – Web version available on my homepage: <http://www.hum.au.dk/semiotics/docs2/faculty.html>
- 2 P.F. Bundgaard, S. Østergaard, F. Stjernfelt, "Meaning construction in the production and interpretation of compounds is schema-driven – Conceptual schemata and cognitive operations compound constructions", *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* 39, 2007: 155-177. Web version available on <http://www.hum.au.dk/semiotics/>
- 3 Texts from the Rockridge Institute <http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/>

Oct 10: *Conceptual Metaphor Theory*

- 1 George Lakoff, "The contemporary theory of metaphor", in Geeraerts, *Cognitive Linguistics: Basic readings*: 185-238
- 2 George Lakoff & Mark Johnson: *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago University Press, chapters 1-6 + chapters 24-30.
- 3 George Lakoff & Mark Johnson: *Philosophy in the Flesh*, Basic Books, chapters 1-4.

Contrasting/critical literature:

- 1 Marina Rakova: "The philosophy of embodied realism: A high price to pay?", *Cognitive Linguistics* (13-3), 2002: 215-244.
- 2 Beate Hampe: "When down is not bad, and up is not good enough...", *Cognitive Linguistics* (16-1): 81-112.
- 3 S. Glucksberg et al.: "Metaphor Understanding and Accessing Conceptual Schema", *Psychological review* (99-3): 578-581.
- 4 John Searle: "Metaphor". In A. Norton (ed.) *Metaphor and Thought*, Cambridge University Press: 83-111.

Oct 24 & Nov 07: *Image Schemas – where do they come from, what do they do.*

- 1 Mark Johnson: *The Body in the Mind*, Chicago University Press, Introduction + chapters 2 & 5.
- 2 Ellen Dodge & George Lakoff: "Image schemas: From linguistic analysis to neural grounding". In Beate Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005: 57-91.
- 3 Joseph Grady: "Image schemas and perception: refining a definition". In Beate Hampe (ed.),

From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005: 35-55.

- 4 Timothy Clausner, "Image Schema Paradoxes: Implications for cognitive semantics, In Beate Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005: 93-110.
- 5 Raymond W. Gibbs, "The psychological status of image schemas, In Beate Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005: 113-136.

Other relevant literature:

- 1 Jean Mandler: "How to build a baby II", *Psychological Review* (99), 1992: 587-604.
- 2 Jean Mandler, "How to build a baby III". In Beate Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005: 137-163.

Nov 21: Mental Spaces, Blending and Conceptual Integration

- 1 Gilles Fauconnier & Mark Turner, "Conceptual integration networks", in Geeraerts, *Cognitive Linguistics: Basic readings*: 303-372.. Web-version: <http://markturner.org/cin.web/cin.html>
Danish version in Bundgård et al., *Kognitiv Semiotik*, Haase & Søn, 2003, chapter 14.
- 2 Gilles Fauconnier & Mark Turner, *The Way We Think*, New York: Basic Books: 2002.
- 3 Gilles Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Dec 05: Len Talmy and the Fours Schematic Systems

- 1 Len Talmy, "The relation of grammar to cognition", in Geeraerts, *Cognitive Linguistics: Basic readings*: 69-108.
- 2 Len Talmy, "The fundamental system of spatial schemas in language", In Beate Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning—Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2005: 199-234.

Dec 19: General Conclusion

Seminar on Language and the Brain

Mikkel Wallentin | | Wednesdays in seminar weeks, 14:00 - 16:00. Building 1.467, room 415

These seminars serve as an introduction to brain function in general, with a focus on research in the neural underpinnings of language. Our knowledge of the way language is processed by the brain was grounded in the middle of the 19th century. Patients suffering from loss of language function was studied post-mortem, and two primary language centres were discovered in the left hemisphere of the brain: A frontal region (Broca's) found to be primarily responsible for speech production, and a temporal region (Wernicke's), considered responsible for language comprehension. This simple model of language/brain coupling still dominates textbooks in linguistics, psychology and neuroscience. But new research both from the field of cognitive linguistics and results from brain scanning experiments questions if this model is adequate. In these seminars the classical neurological model of language function is presented, and in the view of recent research it is discussed to what extent the classical model still holds true today.

Seminar on Visual Art

Peer Bundgård | Thursdays in seminar weeks, 12:00 - 14:00. Building 1.455, room 127

The inscription of meaning in the work of art. The course introduces to the formal means artists dispose of to inscribe meaning in the work of art. Some of these means are genuinely aesthetic, other are not; the latter exploit features that are intrinsically significant in perception. Therefore the course introduces to some of those properties of everyday perception and the visual system that artists use to produce specific meaning effects in their paintings. The course aims at demonstrating that artworks are accessible to rational description and that it is possible to provide with (partial) objective determinations of how and why a given artwork means what it means. Recurrent references are Rudolf Arnheim, Roman Ingarden, Gestalt Theory, Donald D. Hoffman, Michael Leyton and others.

Recommended literature:

Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception*, University of California Press, 1974.

D.D. Hoffman, *Visual Intelligence*, Norton, 1998.

Peer F. Bundgård, *Kunst — Semiotiske beskrivelser af æstetisk betydning og oplevelse*.

Sep 13: Introduction to the course "Basics of Aesthetic Experience".

The course will provide you with insights in some of the essential constituents of aesthetic experience and aesthetic objects. What makes aesthetic experience different from everyday or normal experience? How should this difference be described? What makes aesthetic objects different from everyday objects, be they cultural or natural? What are the means artists dispose of to inscribe meaning in their works? How do these means relate to human cognition? These are some of the questions we will deal with in this course. Its aim is to prove that it is possible to characterize the meaning of aesthetic objects and meaning construction in aesthetic experience in an accurate, rational and non-reductive way.

Sep 27: Part-whole structure, Gestalt Theory, and art

- 1 Barry Smith: "Gestalt Theory: an essay in philosophy". In B. Smith (ed.), *Foundations of Gestalt Theory*, Philosophia Verlag, 1988: 11-80.
- 2 Max Wertheimer, "Laws of organization in perception" (1923): available on this site: <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Wertheimer/Forms/forms.htm>
- 3 Edmund Husserl, 3rd Logical Investigation

Related literature:

Peer F. Bundgaard, "Presentation and representation in art", *Visio* 7 (1/2): 187-204; available on my website: <http://www.hum.au.dk/semiotics/docs2/faculty.html>

Oct 11 & 25: Aesthetic Experience I-II (a phenomenological description)

- 1 Roman Ingarden, "Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Objects", in *Selected Papers in Aesthetics*, München: Philosophia Verlag, 1985.
- 2 Roman Ingarden, "The picture and the painting", "The picture and its concretizations", in *The Ontology of the Work of Art*, Ohio: Ohio University Press, pp. 197-206; 224-231.
- 3 Peer F. Bundgaard, "Presentation and representation in art", *Visio* 7 (1/2): 187-204; available on my website: <http://www.hum.au.dk/semiotics/docs2/faculty.html>

- 4 Peer F. Bundgård, "Intentionalitet og genstand" (chapter 4 in *Kunst – semiotiske beskrivelser af æstetisk betydning og oplevelse*, København: Haase & Søn, 2004):79-106
- 5 Peer F. Bundgård, "Billedets fremtrædelse og betydning—Kvalitativ mellemzone og 2. grads figuration hos Hammershøi", (chapter 3 in *Kunst – semiotiske beskrivelser af æstetisk betydning og oplevelse*, København: Haase & Søn, 2004): 49-78.

Nov 8: Perception and Aesthetic Experience I

- 1 Rudolf Arnheim, Chapters "Shape" & "Space", in *Art and Visual Perception*, University of California Press, 1974.
- 2 Rudolf Arnheim, Chapters 2-3 ("The Intelligence of Perception I/II), in *Visual Thinking*, University of California Press, 1969.

Nov 22: Perception and aesthetic experience II (perceptual computation and aesthetic experience)

— Donald D. Hoffman, Chapters 3-5 in *Visual Intelligence*, New York/London: Norton, 1998.

Dec 6: Perception and aesthetic experience III (generic vs. non-generic; symmetry vs. asymmetry; or how artists know what makes sense to the human eye)

- 1 Ramachandran & Hirstein: "The Science of Art", *Journal of Consciousness Studies* (6/6-7), 1999.
- 2 Michael Leyton, Chapter 8 in *Symmetry, Causality, Mind*, MIT PRESS.
- 3 Michael Leyton: excerpts from *The Structure of Paintings*, Wien: Springer, 2006.

Dec 21: General Conclusions

Seminar on Social Cognition

Svend Østergaard | Thursdays in seminar weeks, 14:00 - 16:00. Building 1.455, room 127

This course is about how and why we experience the world as we do. The text books we use for the course are Chris Frith: *Making up the Mind* and Michael Tomasello: *The cultural origins of human cognition*. Using the first book we will go into topics such as delusions, illusions, imagination, and imitation and we will get an idea of how we recreate in our brains a representation of the external world. Using the second book we will get an idea of what sort of cognitive capacities are necessary in order to develop a social organization. The main assumption in the course is that social organization and language are inseparable and we will therefore pursue the parallel problem: what sorts of cognitive capacities are necessary in order to evolve language? Finally, once language is developed we want to discuss its impact on cognition. Besides Tomasello, we will approach the problems from a more neurobiological perspective. The main reference is in that regard Chris Frith & Daniel Wolpert: *The neuroscience of Social Interaction*.

Practical Exercises

Svend Østergaard & Peer Bundgård | Fridays in seminar weeks, 10:00 - 12:00. Building 1.467, room 515

In the practical exercises the students will have to prepare small papers on topics discussed in the courses Cognition and Semiotics and Cognitive Linguistics and make textual analyses applying methods and concepts from the same courses.

Student Symposia

Organized by the students | Fridays in seminar weeks, 13:00 - 15:00. Building 1.467, room 515

The Friday symposia offer the students the opportunity to present their current research interests within the diverse field of Cognitive Semiotics, and hereby try themselves on an oral presentation among fellow students. With issues ranging from Cognitive Semantics, Interface Design, Visual Art and Musicology, to Cognitive Psychology, Neuropsychology, Neurolinguistics and Neuroaesthetics, the Student Symposia always give rise to fruitful discussions triggered by the application of theory to real-life phenomena. Through open discussions, the students are here allowed to share their research interests, readjust their theoretical focus and, most importantly, develop new ideas for future papers.

SEMINAR CALENDAR

FALL 2007

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 11	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 12	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 13	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	
Friday 14	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	
Tuesday 25	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 26	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 27	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	16-18: Guest Lecture
Friday 28	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	

OCTOBER

Tuesday 9	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 10	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 11	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	
Friday 12	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	
Tuesday 23	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 24	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 25	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	16-18: Guest Lecture
Friday 26	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 6	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 7	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 8	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	
Friday 9	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	
Tuesday 20	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 21	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 22	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	16-18: Guest Lecture
Friday 23	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	

DECEMBER

Tuesday 4	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 5	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 6	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	
Friday 7	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	
Tuesday 18	12-14: Cognitive Semantics		
Wednesday 19	12-14: Cognition and Semiotics	14-16: Language and the Brain	
Thursday 20	12-14: Visual Art	14-16: Social Cognition	16-18: Guest Lecture
Friday 21	10-12: Practical Exercises	13-15: Student Symposium	

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