

Syllabus

Metarepresentations

PhD Elective Course
Department of Cognitive Science
Central European University
Winter 2018/19, 2 credits

Class: Mondays 11:00 to 12:40, Room 103 in Október 6. utca 7.

Instructors: Ágnes M. Kovács & Gergely Csibra

Office hours: by appointment

Course description:

The course provides an introduction to the various notions of metarepresentation in cognitive science, touching also on philosophy, linguistics, and anthropology. The format of the course is a discussion seminar centred around seminal and more recent readings on the topic.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course, students should be able to understand key theoretical issues related to how metarepresentations can be defined and how they are recruited in different cognitive processes, ranging from episodic memory, theory of mind, verbal and nonverbal communication to metacognition and consciousness. Students will develop an insight into the major theoretical debates regarding the nature and the involvement of metarepresentations in these processes, and will learn about empirical techniques and findings from studies in cognitive development, cognitive psychology, and anthropology.

Evaluation:

Students are required to attend classes regularly and to participate actively in seminar discussions. Students are also required to give one or two short presentations of some chosen topic(s) and lead the following discussion. Finally, students are required to submit a term-paper (maximum length is 4000 words). The chosen topic should be approved in advance by the instructors. The final grade will be composed of evaluations of these three elements in the following proportions:

Participation in class discussion (20%)

Presenting papers and leading discussion (30%)

End-of-term essay (50%), deadline for submission: April 8, 2019

January 7

Introductory lecture by Dan Sperber

January 14

Mental time travel

Redshaw (2014). Does metarepresentation make human mental time travel unique? *WIREs Cognitive Science*, 5(5), 519-531.

January 21

Episodic memory

Mahr, J. & Csibra, G. (2018). Why do we remember? The communicative function of episodic memory. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 41, e1.

January 28

Evolution

Cosmides, L. & Tooby, J. (2000). Consider the source: The evolution of adaptations for decoupling and metarepresentations. In: D. Sperber (Ed.), *Metarepresentations: A Multidisciplinary Perspective* (pp. 53-115). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

February 4

Theory of Mind 1

Leslie, A.M. (1987). Pretense and representation: The origins of "Theory of Mind". *Psychological Review*, 94(4), 412-426.

Perner, J. (1991). *Understanding the Representational Mind*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press/Bradford Books, Chapter 3: Toward the representational mind

February 11

Theory of Mind 2

Perner, J., & Leahy, B. (2016). Mental files in development: Dual naming, false belief, identity and intensionality. Review of *Philosophy and Psychology*, 7(2), 491-508.

Kovács, Á.M. (2016). Belief files in theory of mind reasoning. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 7(2), 509-527.

February 18

Linguistic communication

Wilson, D. (2012). Metarepresentation in linguistic communication. In: D. Wilson & D. Sperber (Eds.), *Meaning and Relevance* (pp. 127-162). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

February 25

Nonverbal communication

Csibra, G. (2010). Recognizing communicative intentions in infancy. *Mind & Language*, 25(2), 141-168. (Only 141-144 and 157-161)

Moore, R. (2017). Gricean communication and cognitive development. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 67(267), 303-326.

March 4

Representational artifacts

DeLoache, J.S. (1995). Early understanding and use of symbols: The model model. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 4(4), 109-113.

DeLoache, J.S. (2004). Becoming symbol-minded. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 8(2), 66-70.

March 11

Metacognition

Proust, J. (2007). Metacognition and metarepresentation: is a self-directed theory of mind a precondition for metacognition? *Synthese*, 159(1):271-295.

Carruthers, P. (2009). How we know our own minds: The relationship between mindreading and metacognition. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 32, 121-182.

March 18

Consciousness

Lau, H., & Rosenthal, D (2011). Empirical support for higher-order theories of conscious awareness. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 15(8), 365-373.

March 25

Wrap-up