



Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg
Institute for Advanced Study

Workshop
Turning Information into Knowledge:
Sense-Making in Interdisciplinary
Conversation

Delmenhorst, 23. January 2023

Organizers:

Sabine Sielke (HWK & North American Studies Program, University Bonn)

Alexander Bergs (English Linguistics, University Osnabrück)

Venue:

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Program

The conversation between different fields of scientific and scholarly inquiry, philosopher Gilles Deleuze poignantly put it in the interview “The Brain is the Screen” (2000), “doesn’t take place, when one begins to reflect on the other.” It starts “when one discipline realizes that it has to resolve, for itself and by its own means, a problem similar to one confronted by the other” (367).¹

Since many, if not most research questions cannot be resolved by one singular discipline, interdisciplinary dialogue is indispensable for productive work in the humanities as much as in the social and natural sciences. This, however, is easier said than done, given the fact that different disciplines define alike concepts in rather distinct ways, work with seemingly incompatible methodological approaches, and frame their inquiries with theories that appear opaque to specialists from other departments. As a consequence, questions concerning concepts and methods tend to get sidelined, even in designs of interdisciplinary research projects and proposals. Does interdisciplinary research therefore need a shared terminology, a common language, as some do argue, or do we need to understand that different disciplines use different terms for comparable processes and phenomena? In other words: How do we make sense between and across disciplinary lines?

Both the Hanse Institute of Advanced Study and the “Profillinie: Kognition: Mensch-Technik-Interaktion” at Osnabrück University are dedicated to dialogues across disciplinary lines. More specifically, part of their work focuses on cognition and knowledge production, on how our brains, minds, and technologies make sense of the world. In other words: Both institutions are aimed to resolve, for themselves and by their own means, a problem similar to one confronted by the other. On this common ground, the envisioned workshop on concepts, methods and theories of interdisciplinary collaboration is meant to initiate a new collaboration between the Hanse Institute of Advanced Study and Osnabrück University. Its specific goal is to intensely interrogate the central concepts, terminological register, and the crossroads, if not compatibility of the diverse methods coming into play in the proposal for a Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB) on “Sense-Making: Turning Information Into Knowledge,” currently work-in-progress in Osnabrück. The SFB initiative aims to investigate the processes, strategies, and mechanisms by which different disciplines assign meaning to natural and artificial systems in order to render them plausible and be able to assess and guide our interactions with these systems. By engaging expertise from psychology, artificial intelligence, biology, linguistics, literature, philosophy, and other disciplines the project seeks to arrive at both a fuller and yet nuanced and detailed understanding of how sense-making works in and across apparently different domains.

¹ “The Brain is the Screen: An Interview with Gilles Deleuze.” *The Brain Is the Screen: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Cinema*. Ed. Gregory Flaxman. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2000. 365-72.

Monday, 23rd January 2023

Please note: All (10-minute) impulse papers are followed by a (5-minute) response; the main focus is on our 20 minutes discussion of these impulses & responses in the light of the overall agenda „turning information into knowledge: sense-making in interdisciplinary conversation.“

- 9:30-9:45 **Welcome & Introduction**
Sabine Sielke (WHK & North American Studies, Bonn) &
Alexander Bergs (English Linguistics, Osnabrück)
- 9:45-10:00 **Computational Sensemaking – A Computer Science Perspective**
Martin Atzmüller (Computer Science, Osnabrück)
Respondent: Oliver Ehmer (Romance Linguistics, Osnabrück)
- 10:00-10:20 **Discussion**
- 10:25-10:40 **Cultural Imaginaries of Artificial Sense-Making**
Jan-Noël Thon (Media Studies and Media Education, Osnabrück)
Respondent: Sophie Elsässer (German Linguistics)
- 10:40-11:00 **Discussion**
- 11.00-11.30 *COFFEE BREAK*
- 11:30-11:45 **Spatializing ‚Intelligence‘**
Katherine Sammler (Geography, Helmholtz-Institute for Functional Marine
Biodiversity, Oldenburg)
Respondent: Alexander Bergs (English Linguistics, Osnabrück)
- 11:45-12:05 **Discussion**
- 12:10-12:25 **Sense-making in AI: The Dynamic Interplay of Re-representing and Re-
contextualizing the World**
Kai-Uwe Kühnberger (Cognitive Science, Osnabrück)
Respondent: Sabine Sielke (WHK & North American Studies, Bonn)
- 12:25-12:45 **Discussion**
- 12:50-13:05 **Sense-Making in Communicative Practices**
Oliver Ehmer (Romance Linguistics, Osnabrück)
Respondent: Jan-Noël Thon (Media Studies and Media Education)
- 13:05-13:25 **Discussion**
- 13:30-14:30 *LUNCH BREAK*

- 14:30-14:45 **How to Make Sense of Texts II: Current Perspectives on the Use of Pronouns**
Sophie Ellsäßer (German Linguistics, Osnabrück)
Respondent: Kai-Uwe Kühnberger (Cognitive Science)
- 14:45-15:05 **Discussion**
- 15:10-15:25 **Making Sense of and in Creative Language Use**
Alexander Bergs (English Linguistics, Osnabrück)
Respondent: Katherine Sammler (Geography)
- 15:25-15:45 **Discussion**
- 15:45-16:15 *COFFEE BREAK*
- 16:15-16:30 **What We Talk About When We Talk about Memory, or:
Mapping the Interfaces between Cultural Studies and Cognitive Science**
Sabine Sielke (HWK, North American Studies)
Respondent: Martin Atzmüller (Computer Science)
- 16:40-17:00 **Discussion**
- 16.50-17:30 **Final discussion and Outlook**