

a brief view on a

# Theory of Product Semantic

based on a Work of Jochen Gros (Darmstadt)

**Why?**

## **Why »Theory of produkt semantic«?**

- only the known can be named,
- only the named can be communicated,
- only communicated points can be proved and improved.

**Use**

## **Use of the theory**

- as an analytic instrument very useful

**– *but:***

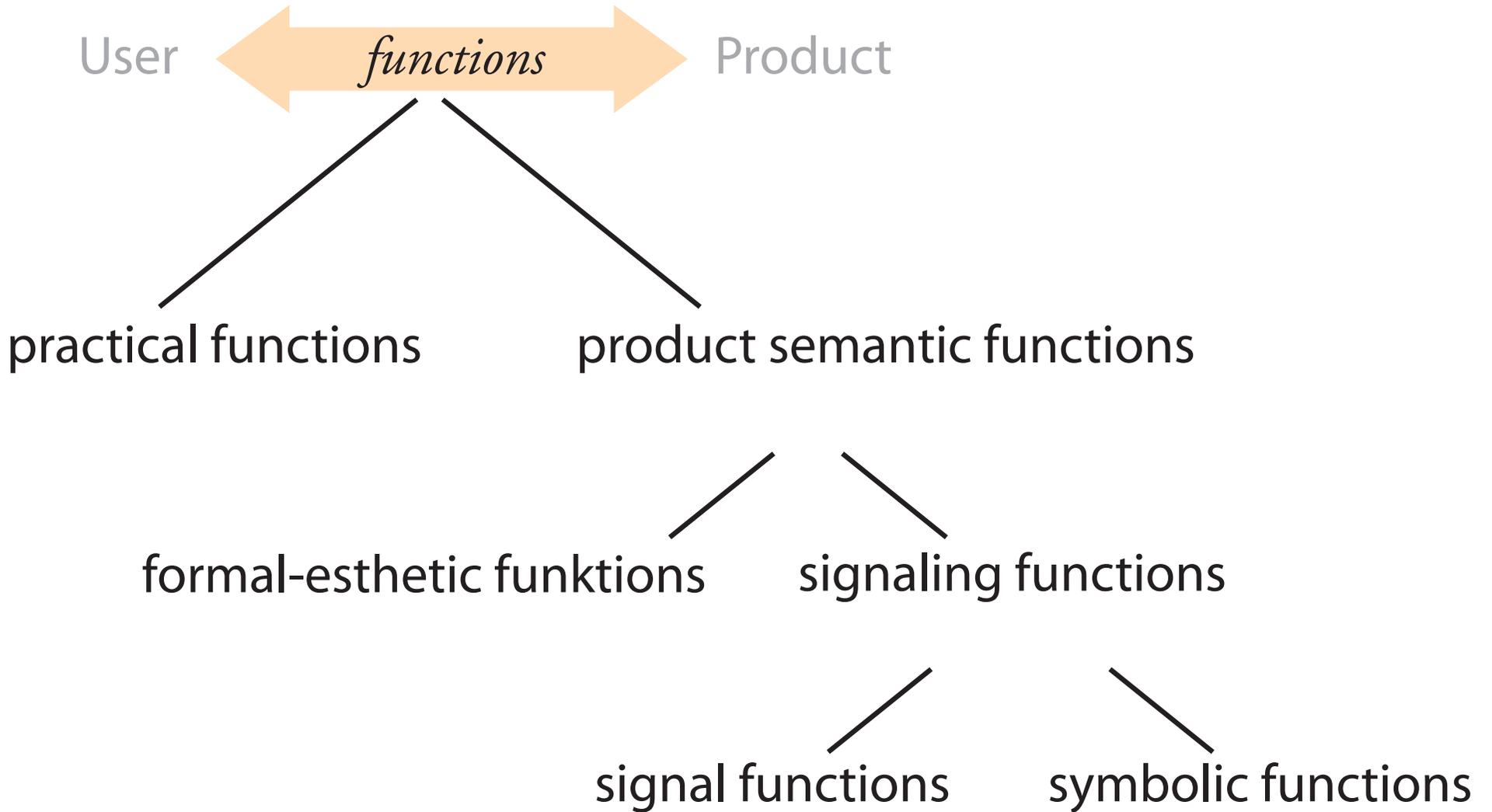
- rational approach doesn't substitute formative competences
- a bad design will not really be improved with endless argumentation

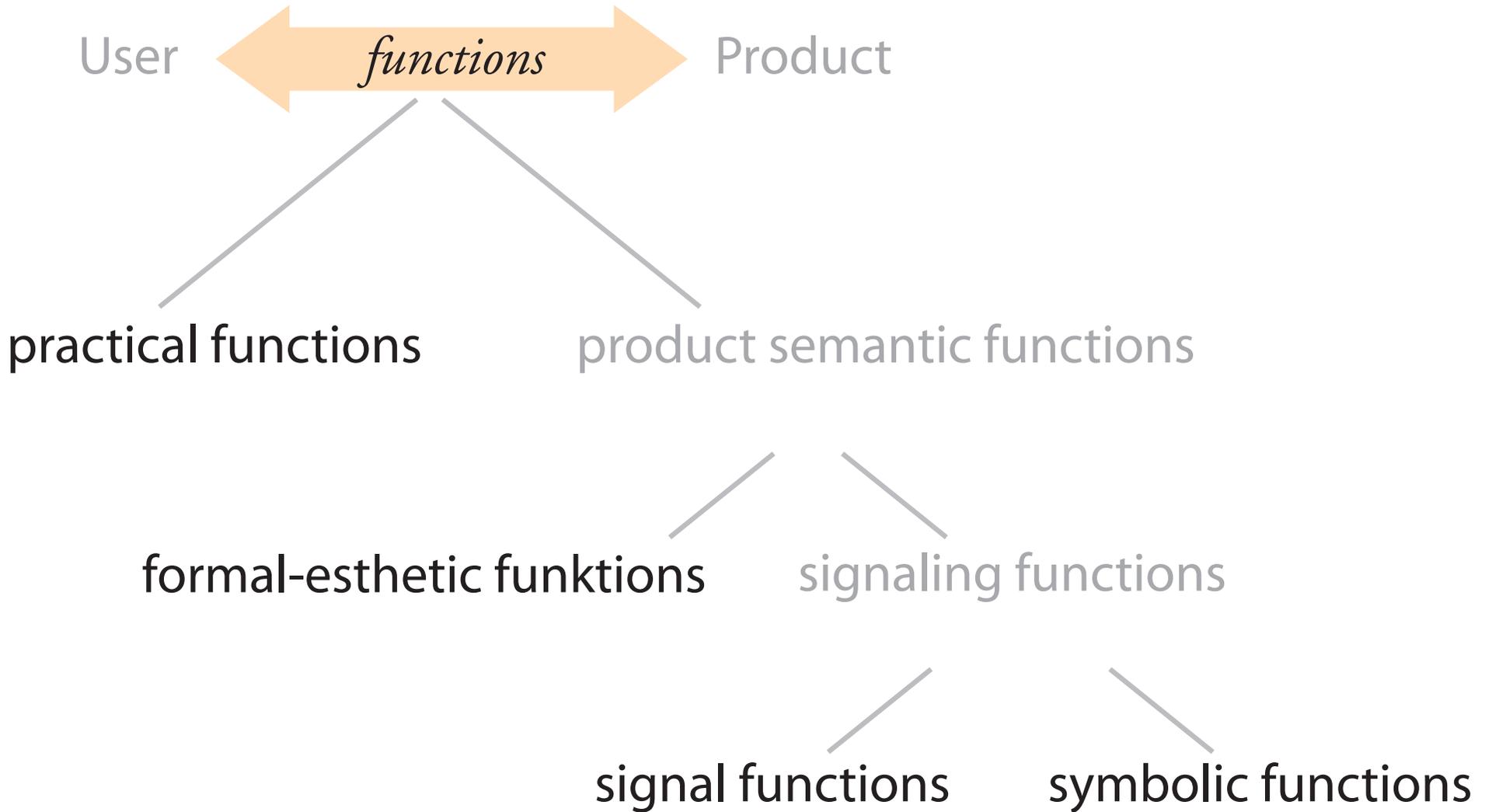
**When**

## **When to use this theory**

The discussion on product semantics is always on sensual functions, on sensual perception and their effects to the viewer.







# **practical functions**

**practical  
funktionen**

**formal-aesthetic  
funktionen**

**signal  
funktionen**

**symbolic  
funktionen**

## **Pragmatic-practically**

- a chair for sitting,
- a car for driving,
- a pan for cooking.

**formal-aesthetic  
funktionen**

## »Shape«: structur, form, colour, ...

- simple – complex
- closed – open
- uniform – different
- symmetric – asymmetric
- clear – unclear, foggy
- in a grid – free formed
- static – dynamic
- well known – new.

# **signal functions**

## »Push the button!«

- Signals to the use (the practical function):  
*big display + keypad: mobile phone,*  
*small display + keypad: pocket calculator;*
- Signals/keys how to use:  
*arrow-shapedd knob shows how to turn,*  
*carved handle says where to grip,*  
*button gives a click .*

**symbolic  
funktionen**

## Meaning in a context

Meanings and und imaginations which are connected to a certain material or shape:

*golden surface, huge chair back, to drive a Harley-Davidson, ...*

Symbols always need a certain context, they are always subjective:

*a three-days-beard can stand for a cool Designer, a Leader from Arabia or a homeless person.*

**...any questions?**

**I want to know more!**

Dagmar Steffen u.a.:

**Design als Produktsprache**

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(sorry, I don't know an english source)