FIW Panel on New Features

Asymmetric Demand:
Pragmatic vs Semantic Interaction

Prof. B. Cohen

City University and

Boxer Research Ltd

We need to shift away form the notion of technology managing information and toward the idea of technology as a medium of relationships.

Michael Schrage, MIT Media Lab.

... creating features that are sensitive to the user's place in the structure of the business and in his/her current situation.

... able to facilitate the 'informal' activities of an enterprise as well as in the creating of ad hoc collaborations. It is these informal and ad hoc services which have been shown to be the most valuable in the operation of a business.

... features that improve how a business operates by improving the inter-personal relationships such as trust that determine the effectiveness of work in the enterprise.

Tom Gray, GRconsultants

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The Customer is Always Wrong ...

In every account of the practice of systems analysis,
the analyst reveals his frustration that
the client describes how the enterprise is supposed to work
but hides how it *really* works (the "power politics").
The ***espoused theory***
is always inconsistent with
the ***theory in use***.

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Semantics and Pragmatics

**Semantics
of the service**

behavioural specification
expressed by the service provider
as a formal model.

**Pragmatics
of the context-of-use**

anticipation of satisfaction of demand
expressed by the actor-client
as a value ladder

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Asymmetric Demand

Symmetry

the supplier constructs the client's reality
***Traditionally, telecoms 'features' have been described
more in terms of network behaviours than of demand situations***

Asymmetry

Clients are *embodied actors* whose discourses
(including their descriptions of demand)
are determined by their
semantic formations

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Actors are not Agents

The *semantic formation* of an actor comprises
lexis, syntax and semantics
which are denotational and standardisable

and

pragmatics
which are anticipatory and particular to the actor's context-of-use


Agents are not embodied
Negotiation between agents in open systems
requires their composition with their actors' pragmatics
There is no Universal Ontology

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Asymmetry Rising

Digitisation
Globalisation
The Semantic Net
Agents in Open Systems
Asymmetric Warfare
Systems of Systems
Relational vs Positional stance
Managerial vs Distributive Capitalism

The Risks of Asymmetry

Demand
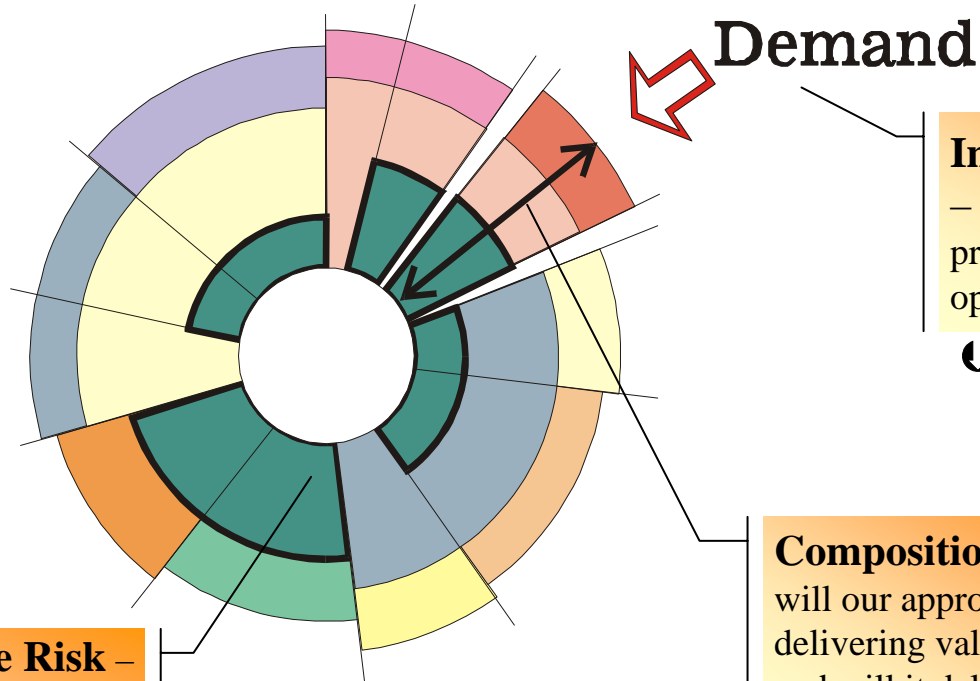
Implementation Risk – will our value proposition capture the opportunities?

↻ **Errors of Intention**

Composition Risk – will our approach to delivering value work, and will it deliver the value expected?

↻ **Errors of Planning**

Performance Risk – will we be able to sustain the constituent capabilities competitively?

↻ **Errors of Execution**

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Intervention on Risk

The resolution of asymmetric demand is
**an intervention in the semantic formations
of both the suppliers' and their clients' actors**
which is
strategic in scope,
complex in structure and
specific in its effects
on how the enterprises *really* work.
It needs the support of new and powerful **computational tools** that
complement, but do not replace,
those for service specification, design and composition.

BRL's PAN Toolset

Elicits each actor's semantic formation as a
triply articulated graph
expressing the actor's relational models of

existential **behaviour**:	processes and events
deontic **organisation**:	transactions and synchronisations
referential **value**:	drivers and demand situations

Composing these graphs reveals **'holes'** in the enterprise
that are symptoms of the **risks** induced by asymmetric demand.

The location and severity of risks are measured and displayed to the actor
using **simplicial complex landscapes** extracted from a **stratified analysis**
of the relations between supply and demand.
Their repair changes the granularity and relational structure so that
the actors' **ontologies** are **composable**.

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