Theorizing & S D Logic: Exploring the Role of a Semantic Lexicon

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Meaning is *never complete* but is continuously created through *competing views* (Hopkinson 2003)
1. Theorizing About Markets and Marketing

• disconnection between the process of theory formulation and theory testing and verification. Day and Montgomery (1999),

• “rethink the role of theorizing” Yadav (2010), MacInnis (2011)

• Gary Frazier, new Editor JM, has appointed two scholars to assist in the review and crafting of theory articles.

• S-D logic and the open-source theory development that it encourages is gaining momentum but considerably more remains to be done
2. How do we Theorize?

- Distinction between the context of discovery and the context of justification (Hunt 1991 and Yadav 2010)
- Critical skills for conceptualizing (MacInnis 2011)
The grand aim of all science is to cover the greatest number of empirical facts by logical deduction from the smallest number of hypotheses or axioms.

*Albert Einstein*
A More Parsimonious Conceptual Framework

SDL

Actors
- Time Bound
- Relationally Bound
- Resource Integrating

Resources
- Operand
- Operant

Service
- Goods
- Currency

Value
- Unique Experience
- Co-created
- Proposition
Recognizing Relational Layers

- Relationship as shared Superordinate institutions
  - Religious
  - Cultural
  - Etc.

- Relationship as Shared Institutions
  - Brands
  - Norms of exchange

- Relationship as Value Co-creation
  - Resource Integration
  - Context
  - Repeat patronage

- Relationship as Exchange
  - Service for service
Accommodating, Integrating, Transcending other Disciplines (Lusch & Vargo Capri 2011)
BUT there is also the need to take SDL to the Empirical Arena

A word from Shelby

*Theorists concerned with developing general theories should be alert to the problems involved in empirically testing their theoretical constructions*

When key constructs in theory become highly abstract, in the sense of being *too far removed from observable reality* then empirical testability suffers, predictive power declines, explanatory impotence sets in. (Hunt, 1983)

A word from Karl

*Middle range theories are a necessity if the process is to be kept manageable* (Weick, 1989)

Insight

*MRT provide a bridge between general theory and practice*
4. Bridging Role of Middle Range Theory  
(Brodie et al. (2011))

Context of Justification

Empirical Domain (Evidence to inform theory)  
Middle Range Theories (propositions & hypotheses)  
General Theories (Foundational Premises)

Shaping & Verifying  
Formulating & Interpreting  
Verifying & Consolidating  
Formulating & Substantiating

Context of Discovery
5. Language and Theorizing

- Language *shapes the understandings* we reach and the practices we carry out (Crotty 1998).

- Rigorous and effective theory building in marketing must be founded on a *reflexive understanding of how meaning is constructed in the social world* in order to be meaningful in and to the social world of marketing (Hackley 1998, p. 130).

- The way people use language *is increasingly being viewed as an important phenomenon* in social and organizational research (Alvesson & Karreman 2000).

- Language is used for doing things. Language use is really *a form of joint action*. It is the joint action that emerges when speakers and listeners – or writers and readers – perform their individual actions in coordination, as ensembles (Clark 1996).
6. Towards S D Logic Lexicon

• Language plays a *vital role in communication* and helps to *shape our thinking* and the *construction of meaning* that subsequently influences human actions. However, it also can *constrain our thinking* by locking us into a particular perspective (Lusch & Vargo 2012).

• As a potential community of service scientists we cannot organize ourselves for greater impact and accelerated learning and knowledge development and dissemination, *without a transcending lexicon* (Lusch & Vargo 2010).

• BUT there also needs to be a *bridging lexicon*
  – terms that align more *closely to the more concrete, actionable language of business practice*
  – concepts that allow for *empirical investigation*
## S D Logic Lexicon: 1st Cut (Lusch & Vargo 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S-D LOGIC</th>
<th>THINKING &amp; MEANING</th>
<th>ACTING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Benefitting Another</td>
<td>Specializing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>Living</td>
<td>Engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions</td>
<td>Innovating</td>
<td>Resource Integrating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-Create Value</td>
<td>Togetherness</td>
<td>Collaborating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value Proposition</td>
<td>Effecting</td>
<td>Customer &amp; Stakeholder Back Processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Exploring</td>
<td>Absorbing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complex Adaptive System</td>
<td>Becoming</td>
<td>Adapting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Ecosystem</td>
<td>Interdependency</td>
<td>Sensing, Anticipating and Responding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Learning Together</td>
<td>Relating</td>
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</tbody>
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The important distinction

• **Transcending Lexicon**
  – Accommodating and Integrating other Disciplines
  – Parsimonious

• **Bridging Lexicon**
  – Aligning theory more closely with practice to allow for empirical investigation

• Need to focus on both in order to advance theory about SDL
Our Research: Exploring the Role of Bridging Lexicons

• Engagement: An important bridging concept for the emerging S-D logic lexicon 2011 NAPLES FORUM ON SERVICE
  – Thematic analysis 46 articles using engage or engagement in discussions addressing SDL
  – Engagement is an important bridging concept

• Service Logic versus Service Dominant Logic: Differences in Terminology or Fundamental Theoretical Differences? 2013 NAPLES FORUM ON SERVICE
  – Corpus analysis of 35 papers by Vargo and Lusch and 45 papers Grönroos & Gummesson that refer to co-creation of value
  – Identify fundamental theoretical differences

• Developing a Semantic Network for S-D logic Lexicon
  Idea for FMM12 Working Paper
  – Corpus analysis of 84 SDL papers to develop a network bridging concepts