

The Practice of Strategy IG Sunday

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**SMS 29TH ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

From 'Turns' to 'Perspectives'

- From Turns: Behavioral, Sociological and Practice turns...
- To Perspectives: Micro-foundations, Strategy-as-Practice, Strategy as Discourse
- To Special Issues: Past: JMS 2001, HR 2007–
Future: JMS 2010 Discourse-Microfoundations
- SMS Practice IG: Broad group of scholars interested in the Who, What, How and Why of Strategy Practice

Sessions

- **Session 1: Learning from Practice - Opening the Black box of Consulting Engagements, Time: 10:00-11:30**
 - Paul Friga (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
- **Session 2: Conducting Practice Studies - Introduction, Methods and Challenges, Time: 13:00-14:30**
 - Leif Melin (Jönköping International Business School)
 - Thomas Lawton (Cranfield University)
 - Paul Knott (University of Canterbury)
 - David Stiles (University of Canterbury)
- **Session 3: Promising Research Directions Using a Practice Approach, Time: 15:00-16:30**
 - Veronique Ambrosini (Cardiff University)
 - Tomi Laamanen (Helsinki University of Technology)
 - Sari Stenfors (Stanford University)

Session 1

**Learning from Practice -
Opening the Black box of
Consulting Engagements**

Consulting Engagements –some extra questions related to our session

- Can they provide a solid enough basis for a research project?
- How can we study/ capture consulting engagements (method) ?
- What kinds of (theoretical & empirical) insights can we gain?
- How can we get access to such engagements?
- Seasonality of the consulting profession.
- How can academic studies ‘compete’ with studies from consultancies (McKinsey etc.)

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From Turns to Perspectives

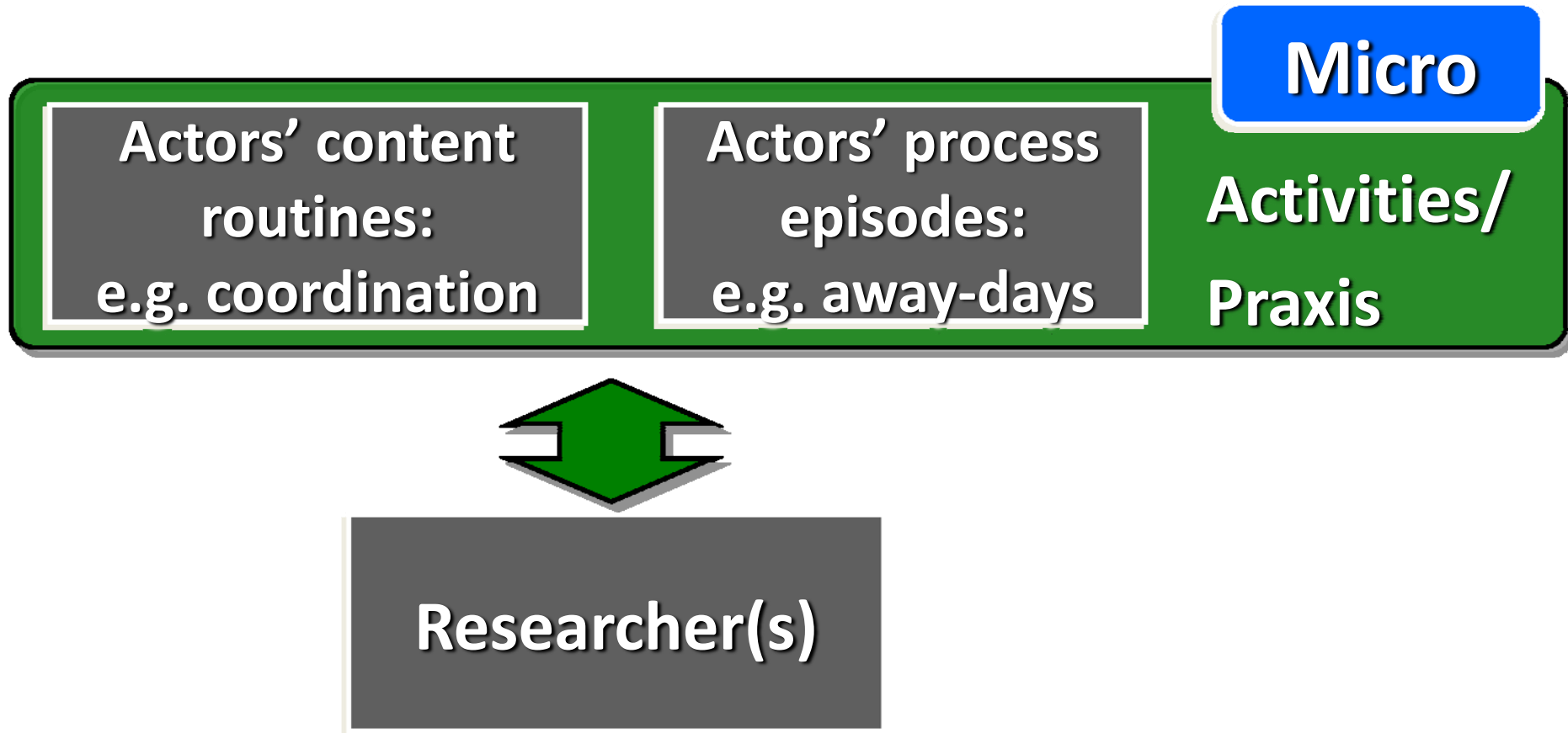
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Session 2

Conducting Practice Studies - Introduction, Methods and Challenges

- Are you conducting practice research?

...the 'Big Prize'



Our aims for this session

- I have used a Practice Approach:
- How to improve the robustness of your method
- Getting it published
- I am considering using a Practice Approach:
- Benefits and challenges

Intro, Methods & Challenges

- Some questions for your table discussion:
- What kinds of methods do you use?
- Do they provide you with enough insights?
- What kinds of questions do reviewers ask?
- Which reviewer comments do you find most difficult to address? Why?

Debrief after Table Discussion

Rigour-Improving:

- What does rigour really (REALLY) mean (in a practice study)? => ORM recent Special Issue
- Importance of clear/robust/improvised/randomised research design
- In your method section it's important to explain what you did (details about the context)
- Fitness between RQ and R.design
- What kind of research questions do we need in practice studies (that will lead to research designs)?
- Relevance of research questions posed in studies
- Exemplar practice studies for PhD students/scholars

Debrief after Table Discussion

Publishing:

- Issue with the use of the 'practice' word
- Target Special Issues (quite a lot out there)
- Initiating Special Issues (SO, HR, OrgScience, LRP)
- Issues with synthesizing your data => Ability to debate with the editor for a 10,000+ words paper –most of them will be sensible
- How do you convince you have a clear contribution? (Make sure you target your work to the right journal)
- Papers often get rejected in the first round due to lack of methodological clarity – not because they didn't provide enough data
- Review for the journal you aim to send your work at

Intro, Methods & Challenges

Some extra issues:

- Is there a distinction between ‘traditional’ and ‘exotic methods’?
- Gaining & Maintaining Access
- The issue of efficiency – resources required for in-depth practice studies (especially for potential doctoral students)
- Are links with the Macro level important?
- Autonomous area or Interrelated with others?

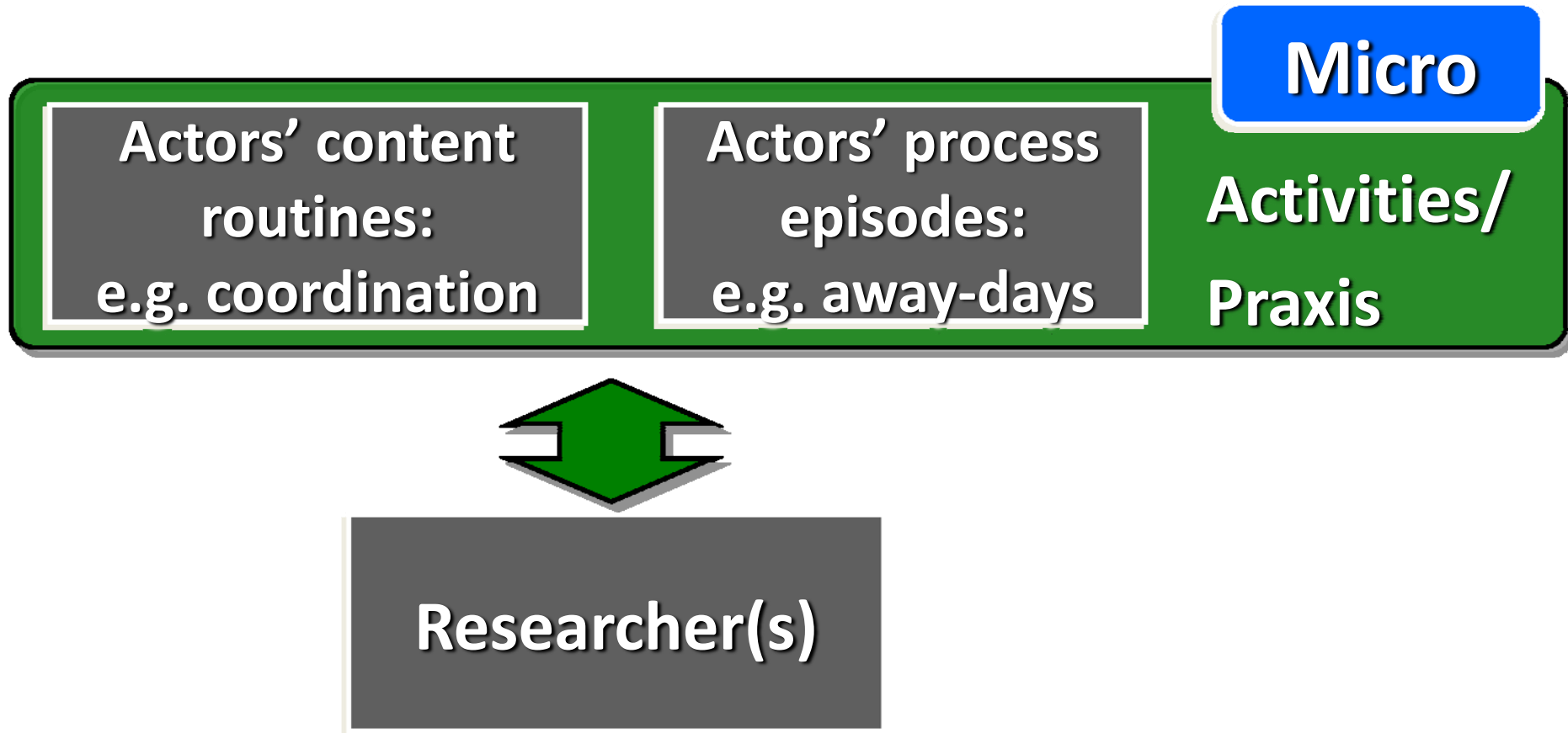
Session 3:

Promising Research Directions Using a Practice Approach

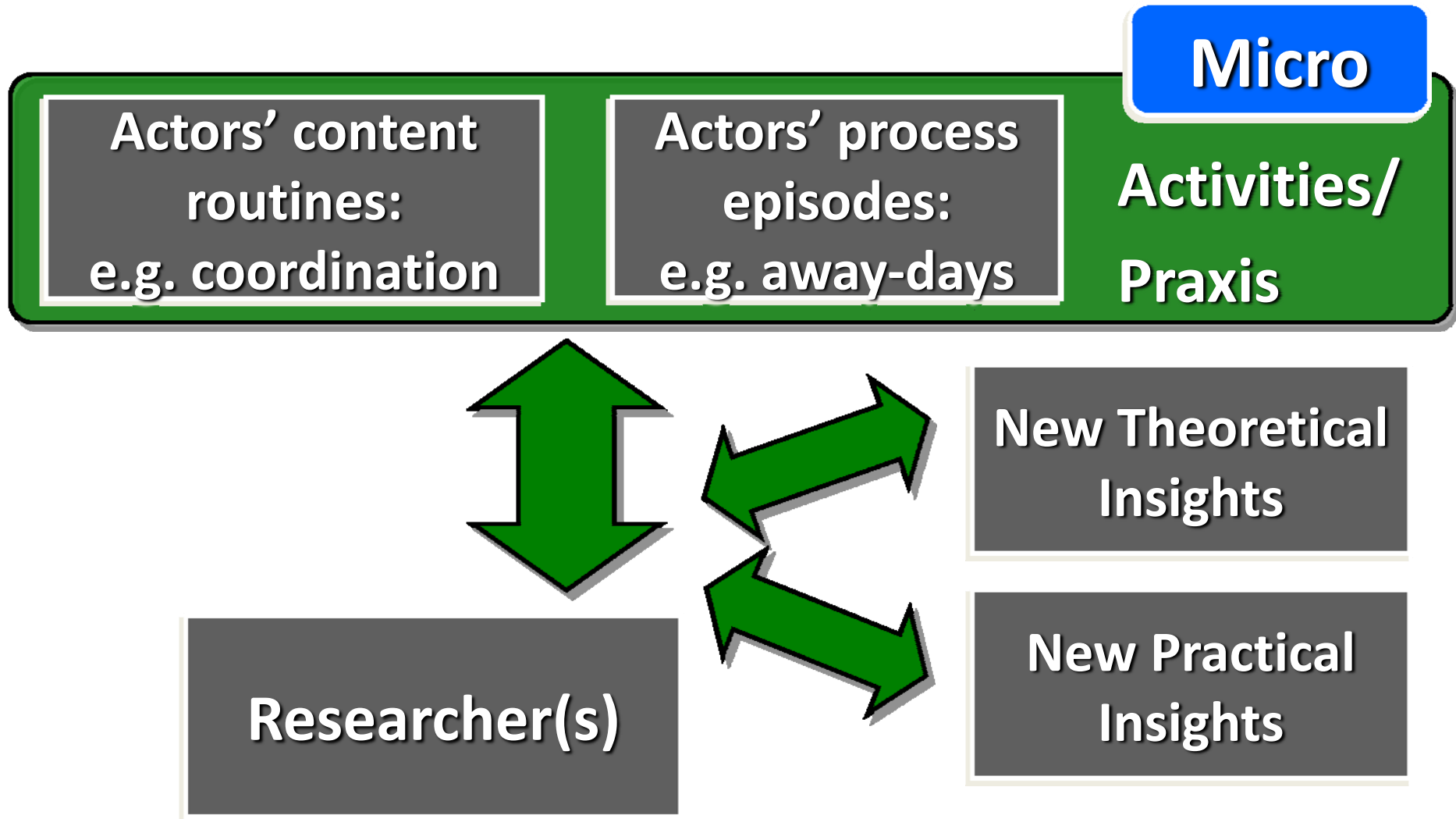
Research Directions

- Its about...convincing a prospective Doctoral Student!
- Traditional or Exotic theories.
- Contributions: raise new debates or contribute to established debates?
- Which current debates can practice research tackle? In what way (so what)?
- What could some of the new debates look like?
- Autonomous area or Interrelated with others?

...the 'Big Prize'



...the 'Big Prize'



(Based on Johnson, Langley, Melin & Whittington, 2007)

Why Practice? Impact?

- IMPACT?
- Papers, Journals (SI, journal board membership), Doctoral Students, Research Projects (funding), recognized in the British Research Assessment Exercise (RAE2008).

Why Practice? Impact?

- Can we sustain this excitement and growth?
- It will depend on:
 - delivering **quality** research output (how well we address key debates beyond practice ones)
 - convincing about the **robustness** of our theories, methods & results
 - reaching out to **non-practice audiences**