InterPARES 3 Project
International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems
TEAM Canada

in saeculis authenticus

Network of Structures and People:

Developing and Implementing a Recordkeeping System

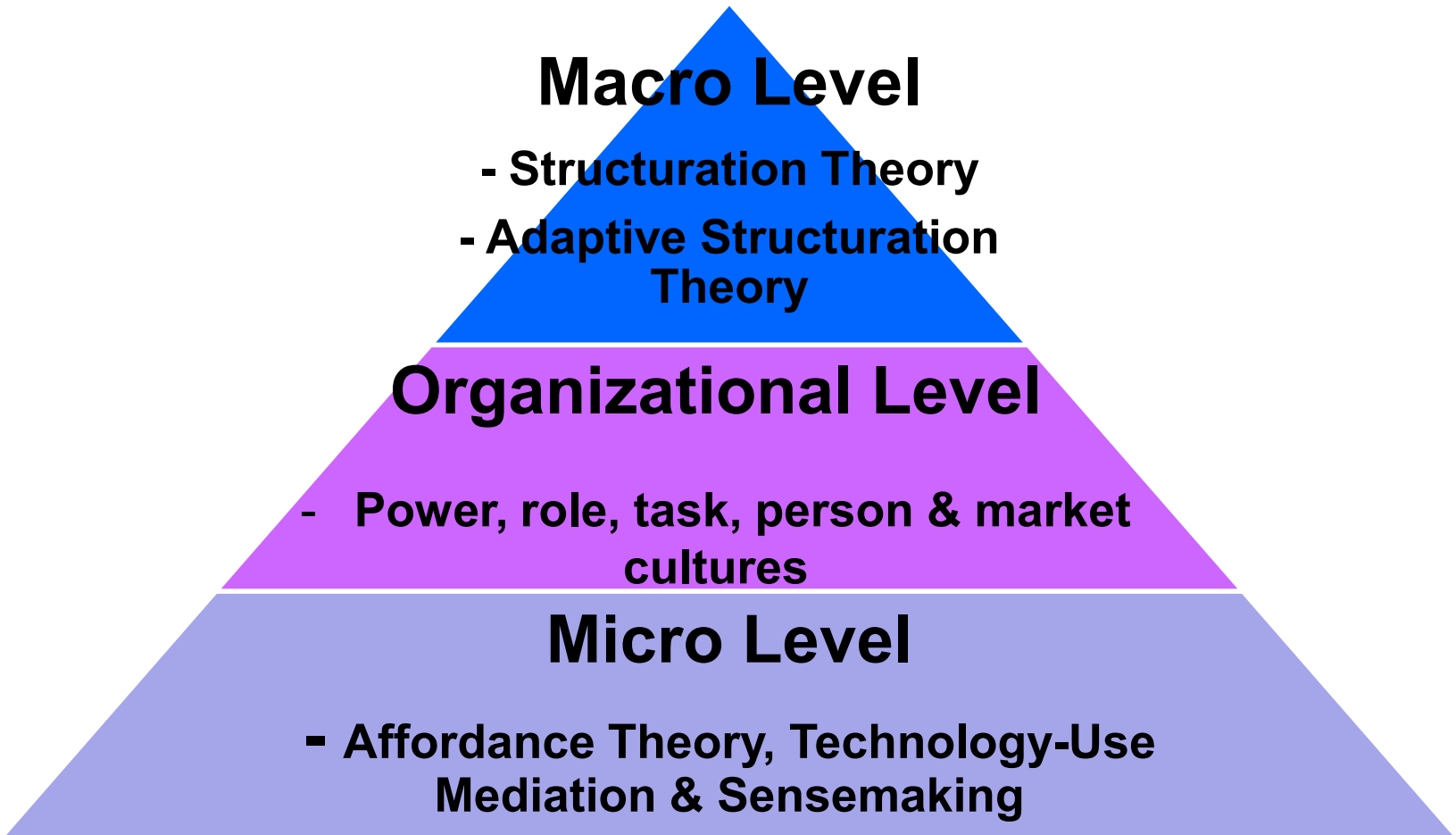## AABC Conference 2011
29 April 2011

InterPARES Project
Elaine Goh
Graduate Research Assistant

Outline

- Framework in understanding organizational culture issues & how it affects the development and implementation of a recordkeeping & preservation system

- Highlight emerging themes based on an inductive analysis of 24 semi-structured interviews

  ➤ Records managers/archivists/FOI analysts
  ➤ Records creators
  ➤ IT managers
  ➤ Management

Framework

Macro Level

- Structuration Theory
- Adaptive Structuration Theory

Organizational Level

- Power, role, task, person & market cultures

Micro Level

- Affordance Theory, Technology-Use Mediation & Sensemaking

Macro Level

- **Functionalist Perspective**

  - Social structure separate from the individual
  - Social structure constraints the individual

- **Interpretivist Perspective**

  - Social structures and cultures are based on
    the experiences of people
  - Social structures cannot exist independently outside
    the minds of people

Macro Level – Structure, Agency & Technology

Functionalist Perspective

Interpretivist Perspective

Structuration Theory Adaptive Structuration Theory
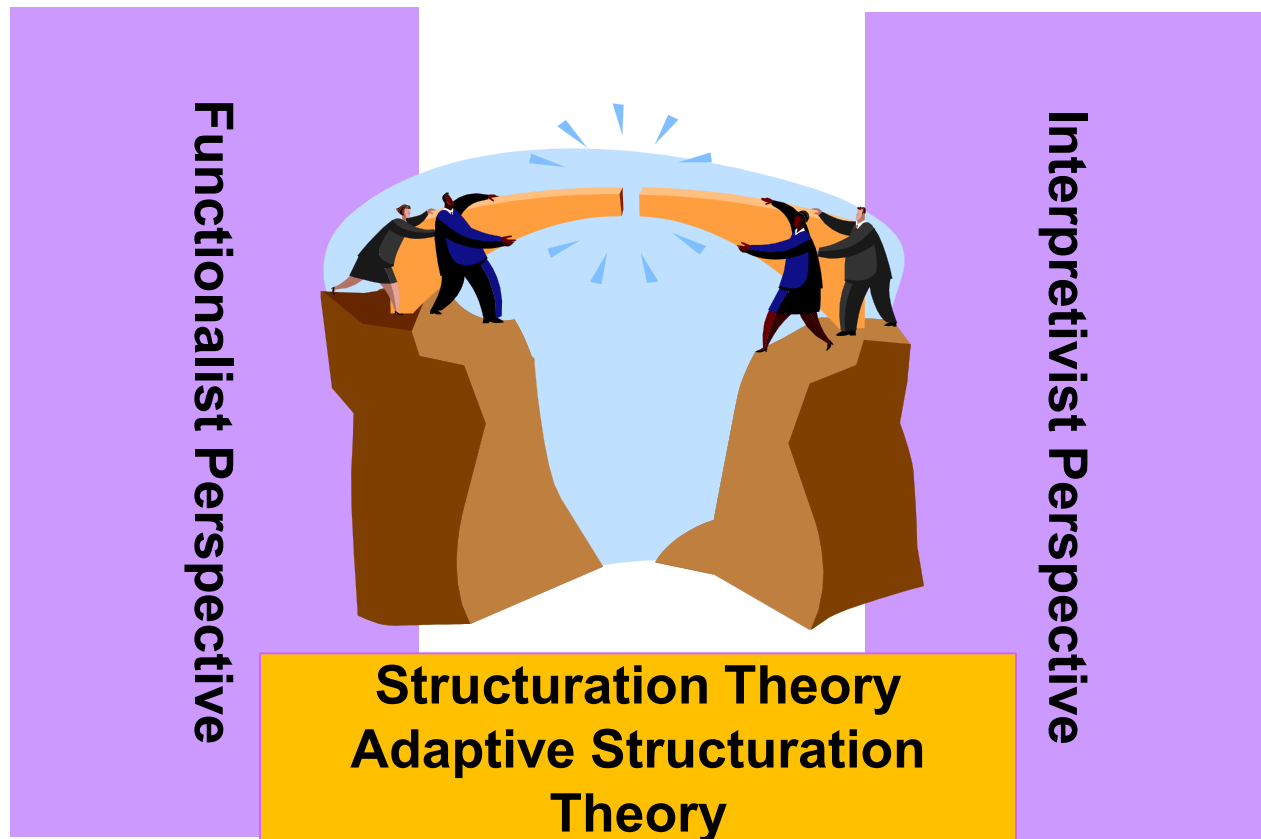
Macro Level - The Middle Ground

- Structuration Theory

  - Structures exist independently of people

  - Structures also exist in the course of interaction with people

- Adaptive Structuration Theory

  - Interplay and recursive relationship between technology and action

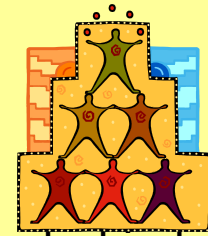- Culture is **both** structure and agency

Power Culture

- Strong personalities, charisma, proven success

- Trust individuals close to the centre of authority

- Identify with immediate boss or supervisor

- Ad hoc decision-making process

- Personal contacts and networks very important

Example: Family run businesses

Role Culture

- Departments segregated in terms of functions and/or business processes

- Regulated by policies, procedures and rules

- Hierarchical structure, clear lines of authority

- Clearly defined job descriptions

- Focus on meeting targets, task definition

Example: Government agencies

Task Culture

- Project teams and task forces that work independently
- Lateral decision-making
- Agile, reacts quickly to change
- Results oriented, values innovation
- Specialised knowledge valued over rank or status

Example: Research institutes

Person Culture

- Members are reason for existence
- Expertise and/or talent is greatest asset
- Fluid structure, loose rules
- Values individualism, innovation, and freedom
- Administrative and/or managerial responsibilities viewed as administrative burdens

Example: Independent professionals, entrepreneurs

Market Culture



- Aggressive and competitive.

- Quick response to external environment

- Achievement oriented, focused on outcomes

- Values winning, setting and exceeding targets

- Achieving results more important than following procedures.

Example: Financial institutions

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Micro Level

- **Affordance Theory**
  - Perceived affordances of a digital recordkeeping system
  - Enabling & constraining aspects of a system

- **Technology-Use Mediation**
  - Role of mediators in establishing, reinforcing and adjusting the use of a digital recordkeeping system

- **Sensemaking**
  - Social process to interpret an environment
  - Search for meanings in communication
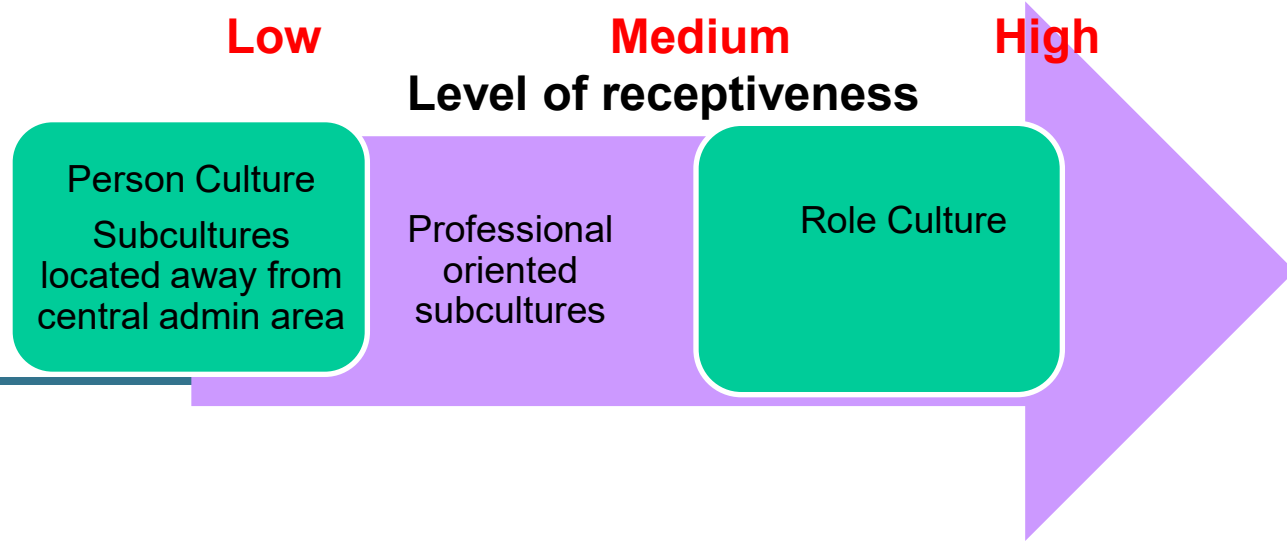 - Uncover mental constructs
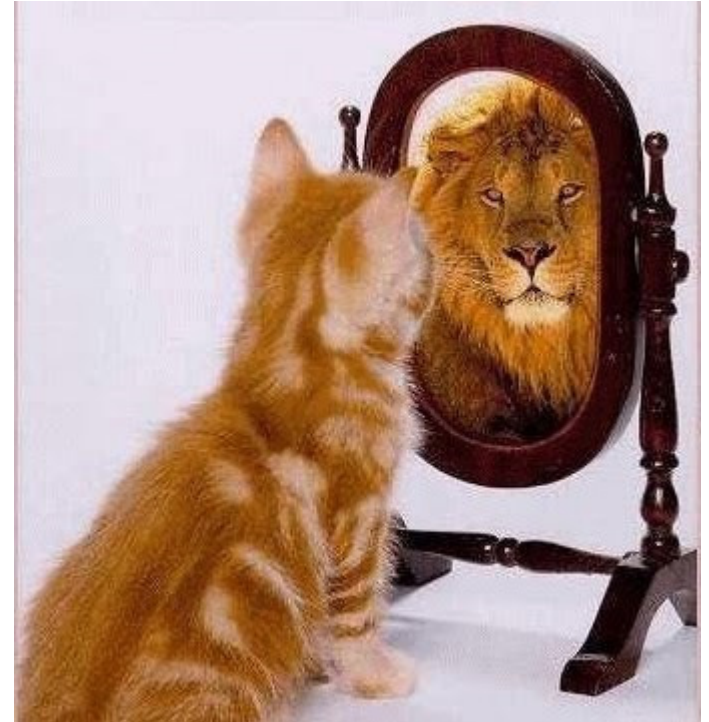
Emerging Themes

- The culture within academic institutions which values independence and freedom is less receptive in complying with records management policies and procedures and in adopting a records management system as compared to the culture within government which is hierarchically structured and operates on rules and procedures.

Emerging Themes

- Subcultures which are administrative and secretariat in nature tend to comply with records management policies and procedures and are more receptive in adopting a records management system as compared with subcultures which are physically located away from the central administrative area.

- Within professional subcultures, there are varying degrees of compliance in terms of records management. Some occupations such as human resources, finance, planning and engineering tend to place greater emphasis on recordkeeping as compared to occupations which focus more on the arts and culture.

Low   **Medium**   **High**

Level of receptiveness

Person Culture

Subcultures located away from central admin area

Professional oriented subcultures

Role Culture

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Emerging Themes

- Need for a group of mediators who are familiar with the recordkeeping system and can act as intermediaries with users and provide continuous support. This group of mediators also directly influence and intervene the adoption and use of the system.

- Need for a governance structure to formally endorse and support the work of mediators and to ensure the involvement of records management during the design, development and implementation stage of any recordkeeping system.

Emerging Themes

- Identify champions and expert users within the organization to promote the use of recordkeeping system amongst their peers.

- Varying perceptions amongst stakeholders on the affordances of paper *vis-à-vis* that of digital records.
  - perceived affordance that paper is more flexible and tangible
  - perceived affordance that digital records offer easier ease of access

Next Steps

- Peer debriefing to enhance the rigor in interpretive research

- Identify organizational culture factors to develop an organizational culture assessment checklist and risk assessment toolkit

Thank You