



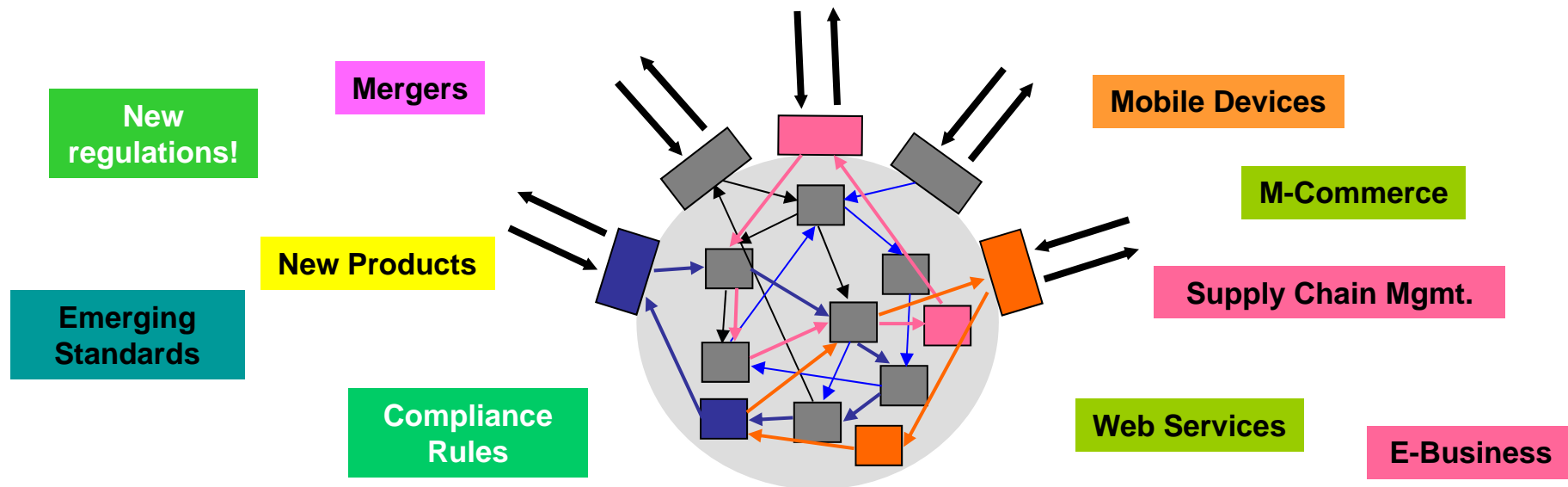
A Decade of Research on "Fluid" Processes: Beyond Rigidity in Business Process Support

Manfred Reichert | 25 September 2012 | TU/e Eindhoven

Manfred Reichert

Motivation

**Permanent new "trends" – require new or adapted services
... which must be integrated**

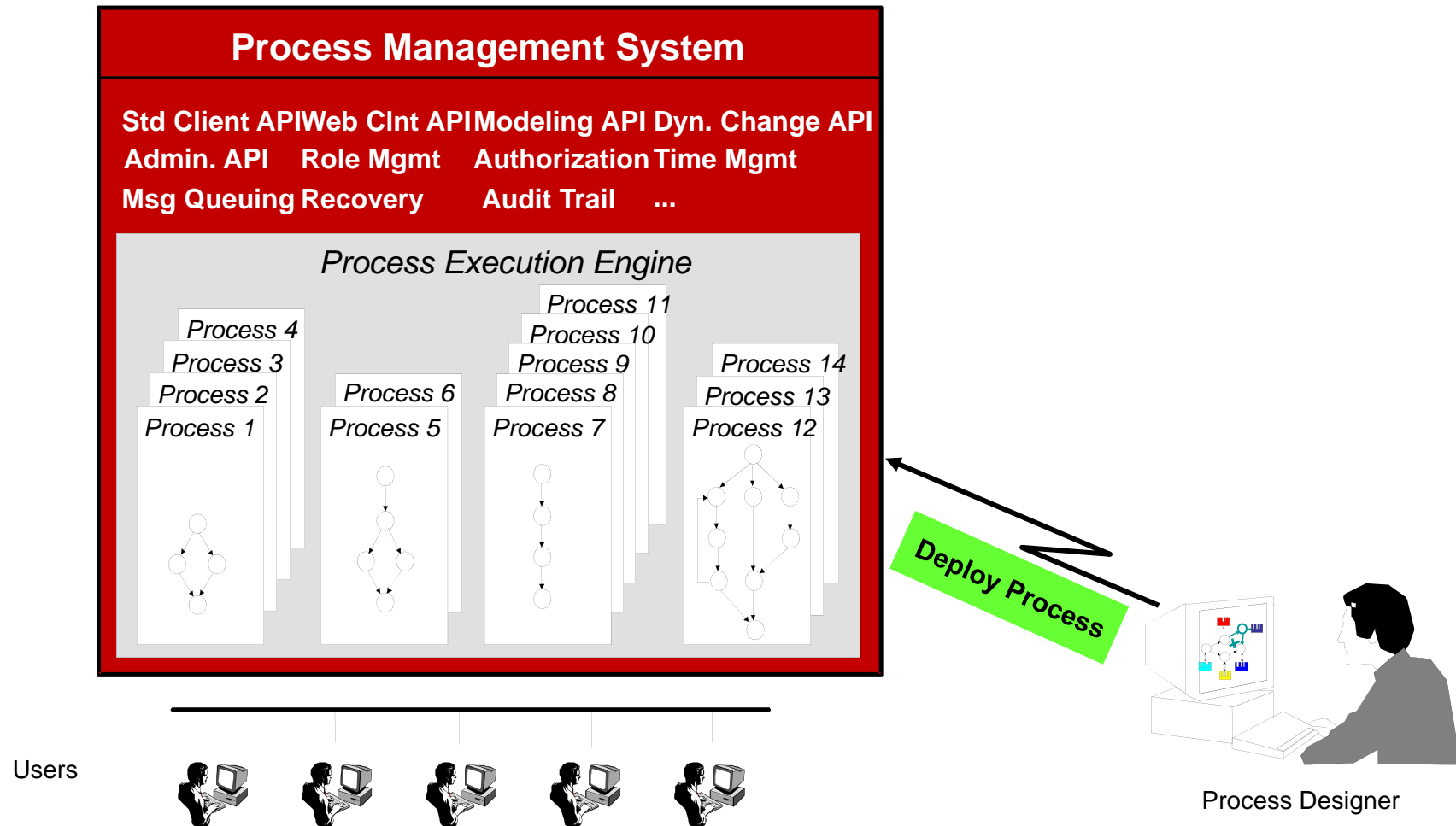


Issues:

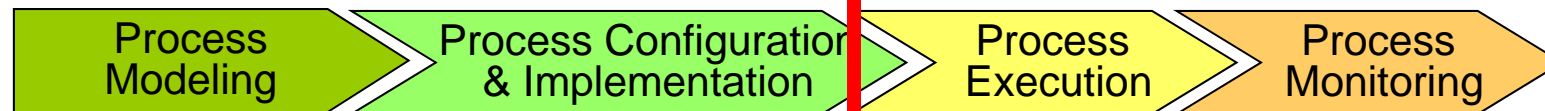
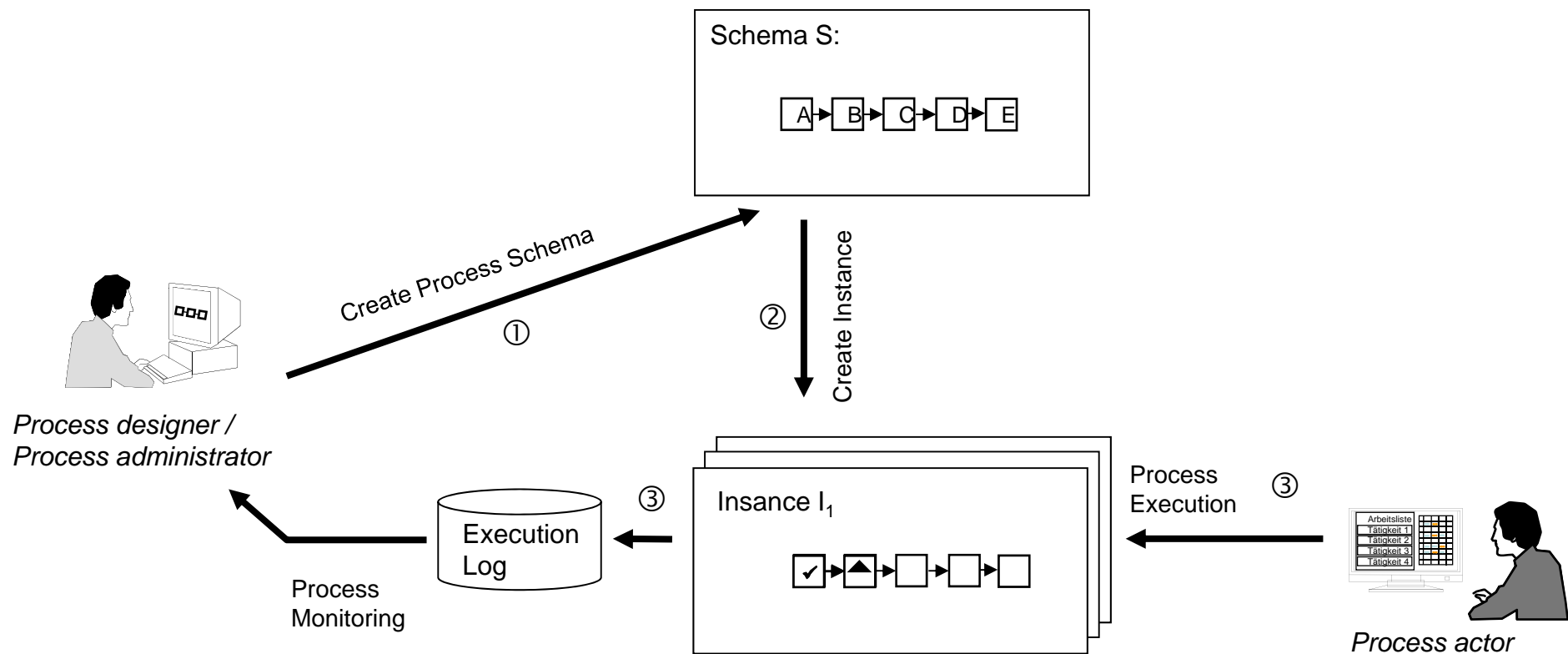
- ◆ How quickly can processes be implemented?
- ◆ At which costs? – With which error risks?
- ◆ How expensive will later process changes be?
- ◆ How to avoid high maintenance efforts?

} ⇒ ***Need for Process-awareness***

Motivation



Motivation



Motivation

- ❑ Today's BPM tools are ill equipped to enable **agile enterprises** due of their **inherent brittleness** and **inflexibility**
- ❑ Current tool generation implicitly embraces the “**engineer – use** “**dichotomy** inherited from traditional SE approaches; i.e., systems are first “engineered” and then “used” (or “operated”)
- ❑ **Maintenance** and **evolution** are not regarded as part of operation, but rather as interruptions to the “in use” state
- ❑ **Role of end users** is not well understood!

Real-world processes are "fluid"!

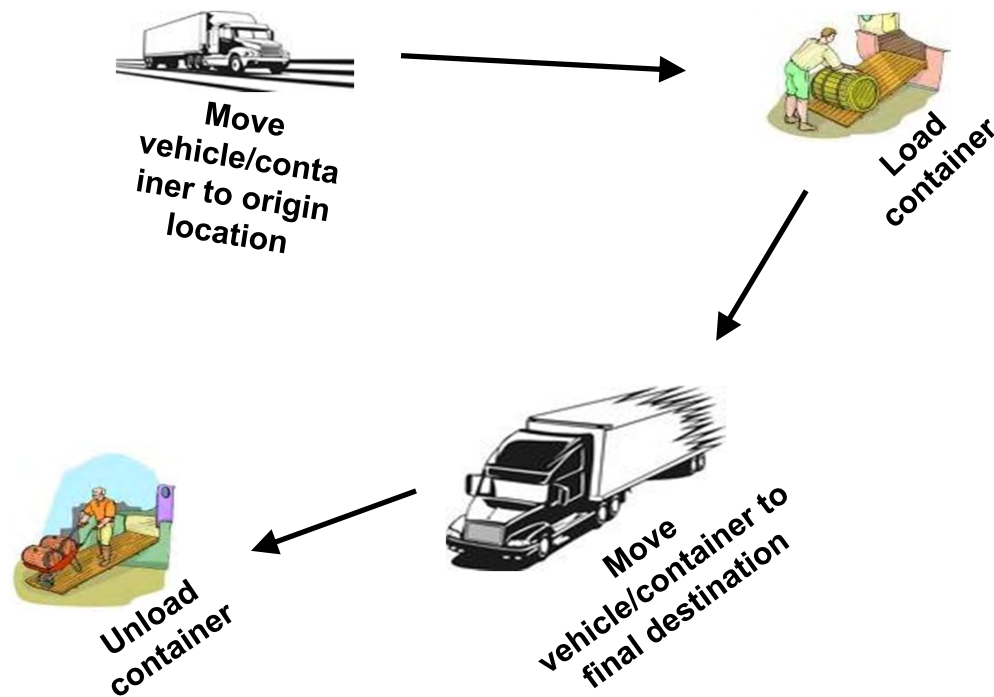


Why process instances dynamically evolve ...

Why Process Instances Dynamically Evolve ...

Example: Transportation Domain

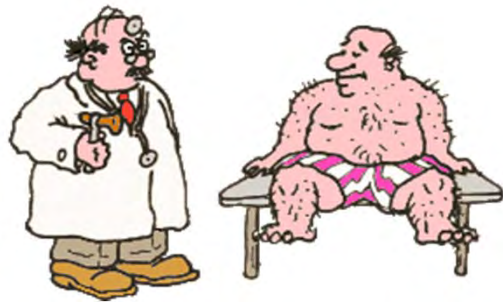
- ❑ processes cannot be completely pre-modeled



Why Process Instances Dynamically Evolve ...

Example: Healthcare Domain

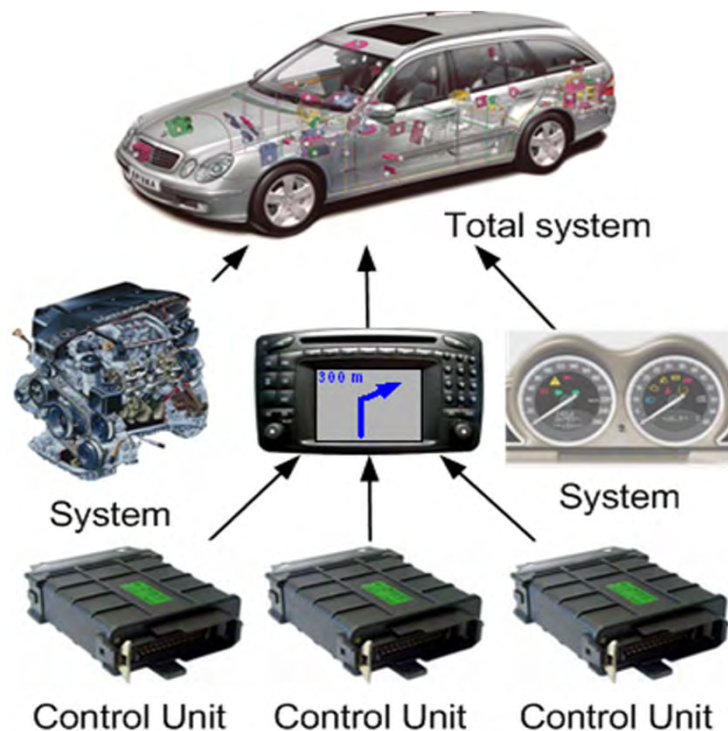
- ❑ Process-aware information systems must not prescribe to physicians how to treat their patients?



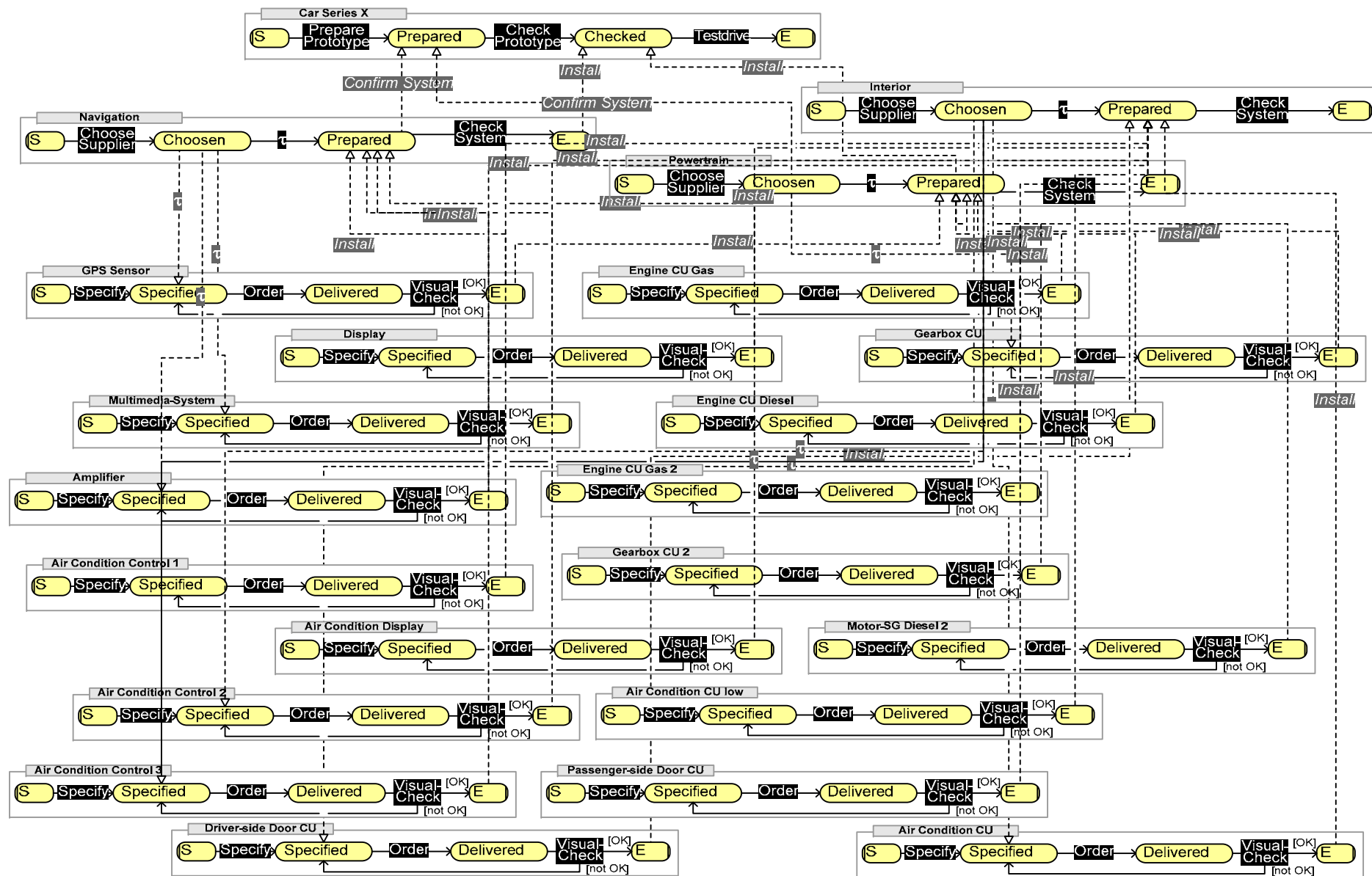
Why Process Instances Dynamically Evolve ...

Example: Automotive Engineering

- ❑ long-running engineering processes cannot be completely pre-modeled



- ✦ Example: Release management for E/E-systems in a car
- ✦ 200 - 300 control devices to be systematically tested and released
- ✦ Requires the execution of hundreds or thousands of process instances
- ✦ Concurrent engineering ⇔ complex dependencies have to be considered



Why Process Instances Dynamically Evolve ...

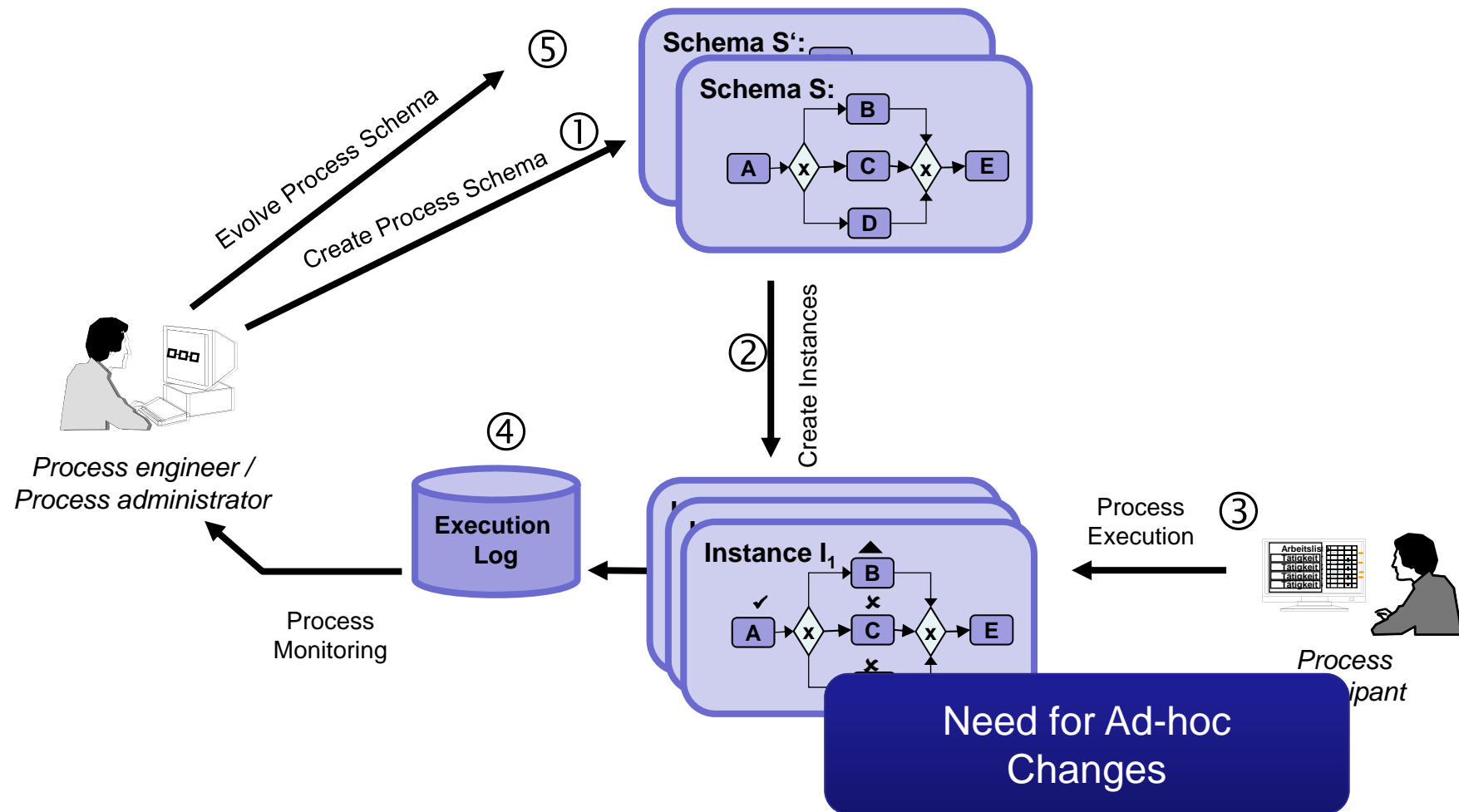
- ❑ Requires to **dissolve the fundamental distinction between “engineering” and “use”**; i.e., end users must be empowered to dynamically evolve processes
- ❑ This will lead us to a new class of processes whose “engineering” and “use” is intervoven ➡ **fluid processes**
- ❑ *Fluid processes are continually **adapted** and reformed to **fit the actual needs and constraints** of the situation in hand and to fulfill the overall goals of the involved organizations in the best possible way.*



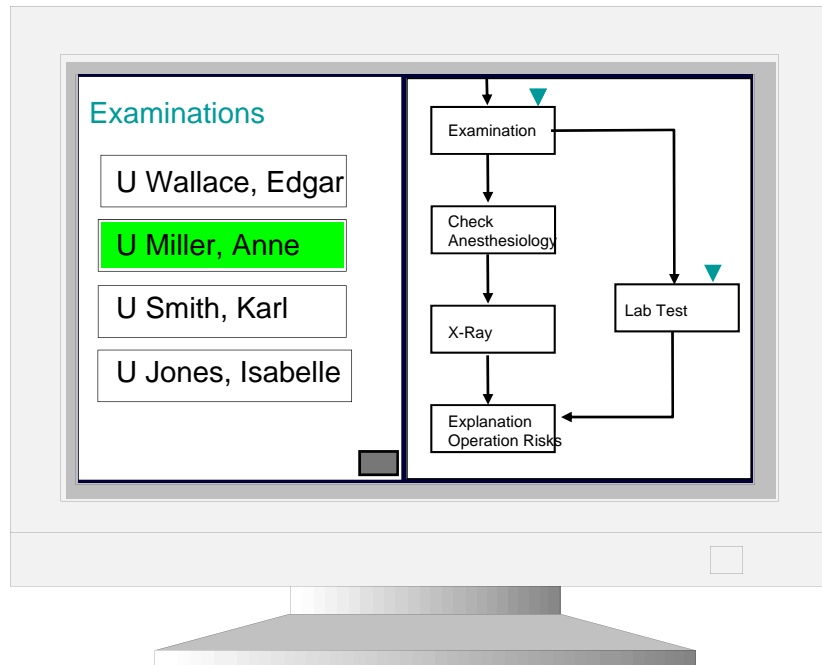


Adaptive Process-Aware Information Systems:
Enabling Fluid Processes at Runtime

Adaptive PAIS: Ad-hoc Changes



Ad-hoc Changes



The Users' View

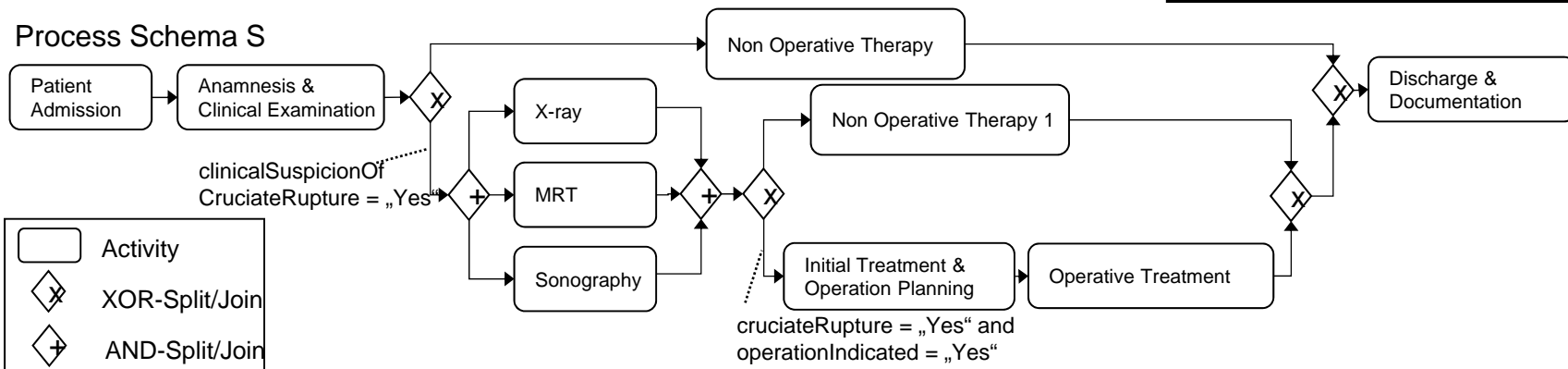


Ad-hoc Changes

Ad-hoc Flexibility:
Deviations, Change

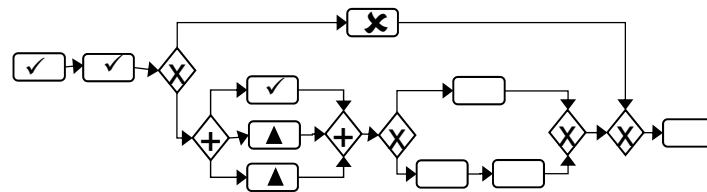
Process Type Level

Process Schema S



Process Instance Level

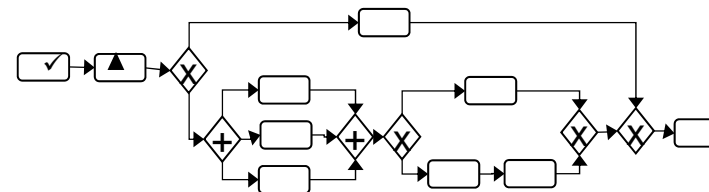
Process Instance I1



Execution Trace:

$\sigma_1 = \langle \text{„Patient Admission“}, \text{„Anamnesis & Clinical Examination“}, \text{„X-ray“} \rangle$

Process Instance I2



Execution Trace:

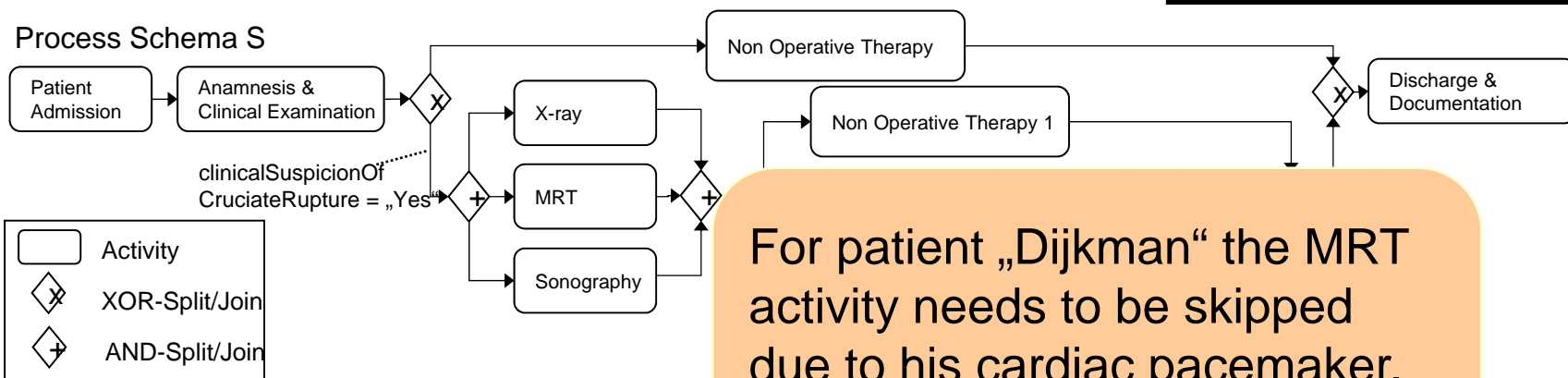
$\sigma_2 = \langle \text{„Patient Admission“} \rangle$

Ad-hoc Changes

Ad-hoc Flexibility:
Deviations, Change

Process Type Level

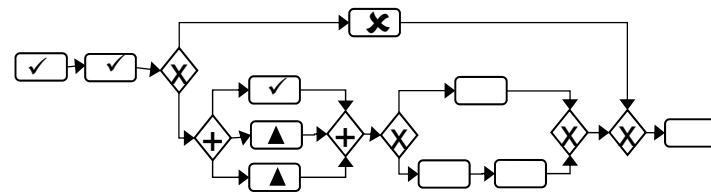
Process Schema S



For patient „Dijkman“ the MRT activity needs to be skipped due to his cardiac pacemaker.

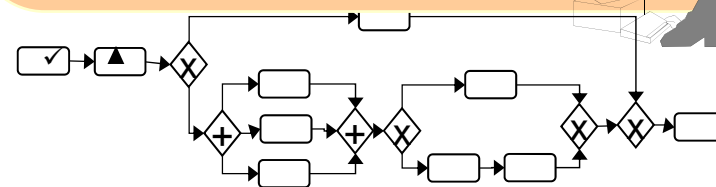
Process Instance Level

Process Instance I1



Execution Trace:

$\sigma_1 = \langle \text{„Patient Admission“}, \text{„Anamnesis & Clinical Examination“}, \text{„X-ray“} \rangle$



Execution Trace:

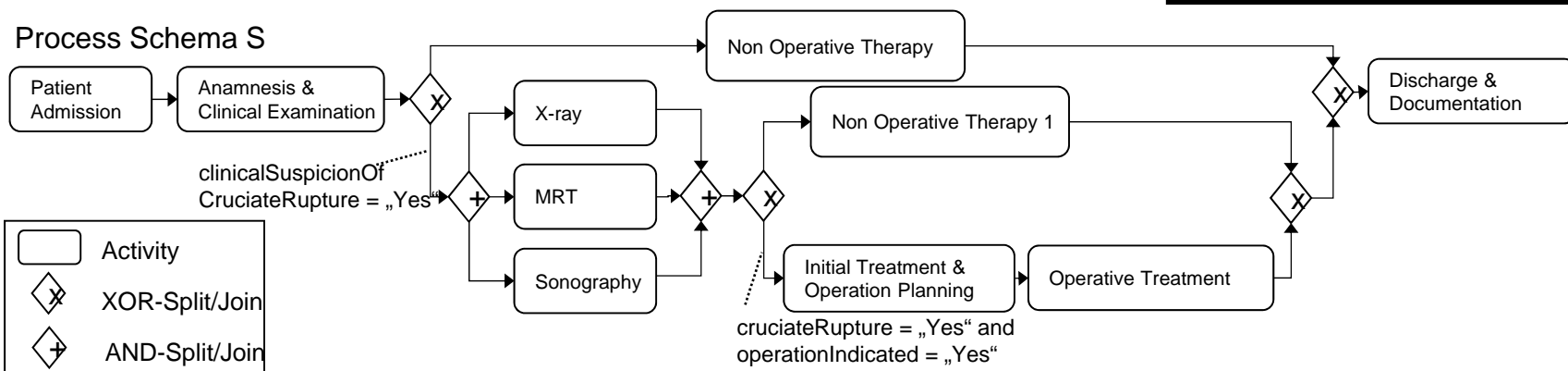
$\sigma_2 = \langle \text{„Patient Admission“} \rangle$

Ad-hoc Changes

Ad-hoc Flexibility:
Deviations, Change

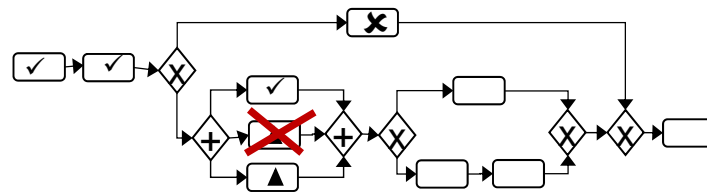
Process Type Level

Process Schema S



Process Instance Level

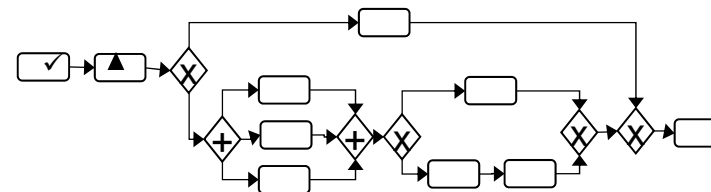
Process Instance I1



Execution Trace:

$\sigma_1 = \langle \text{„Patient Admission“}, \text{„Anamnesis & Clinical Examination“}, \text{„X-ray“} \rangle$

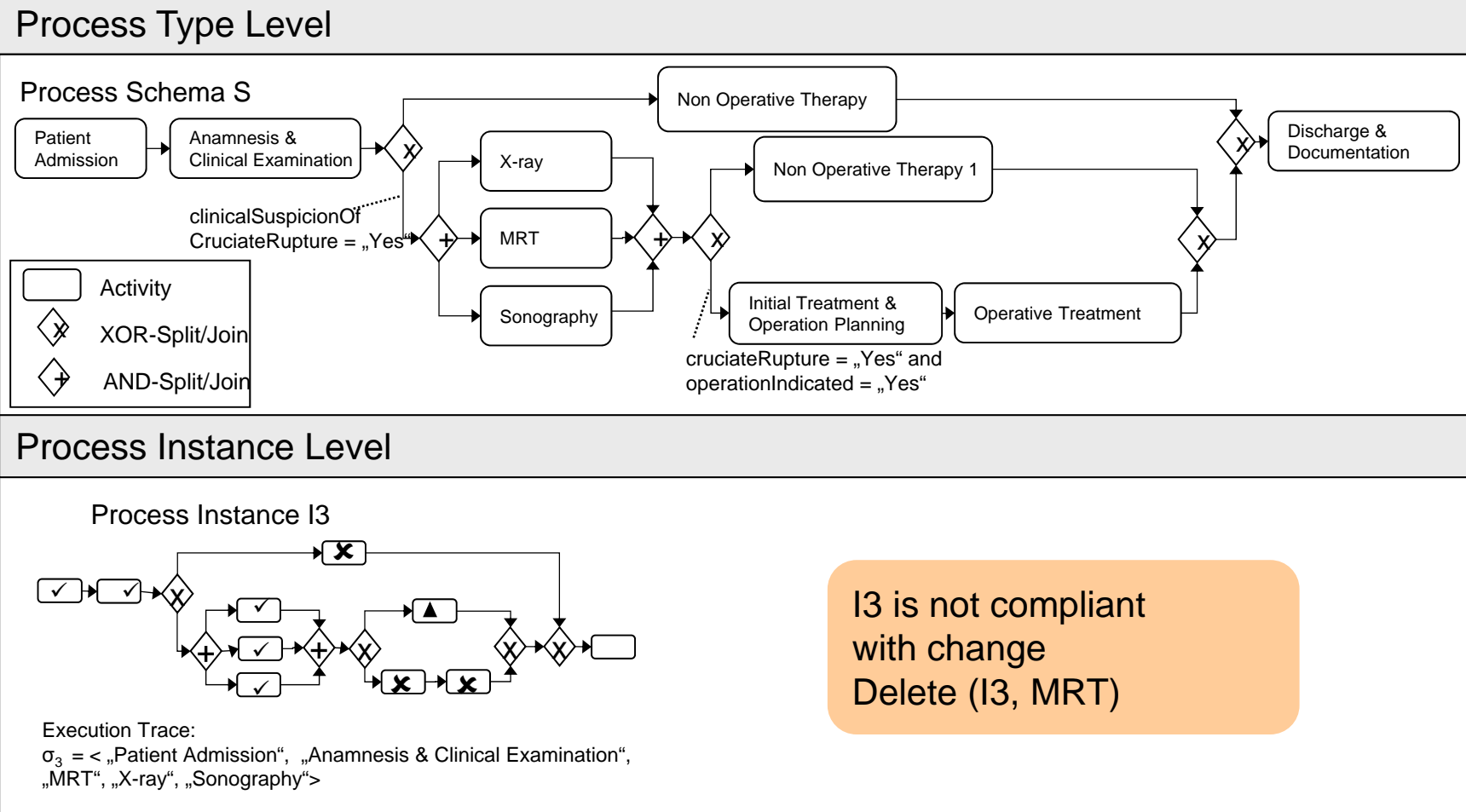
Process Instance I2



Execution Trace:

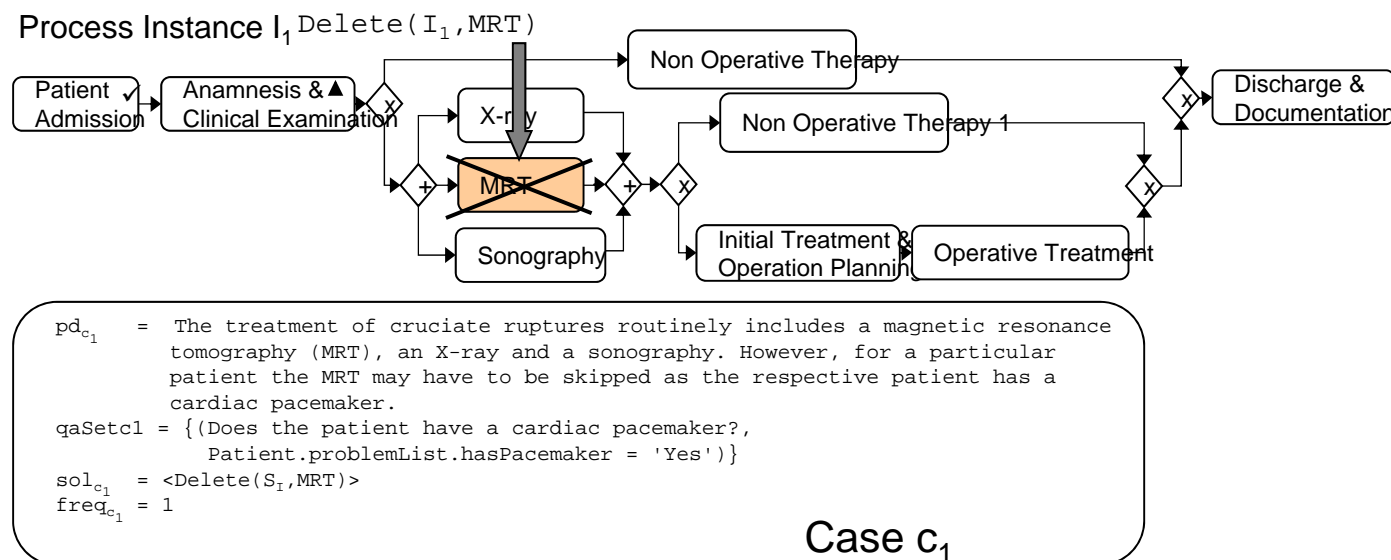
$\sigma_2 = \langle \text{„Patient Admission“} \rangle$

Ad-hoc Changes: State Compliance

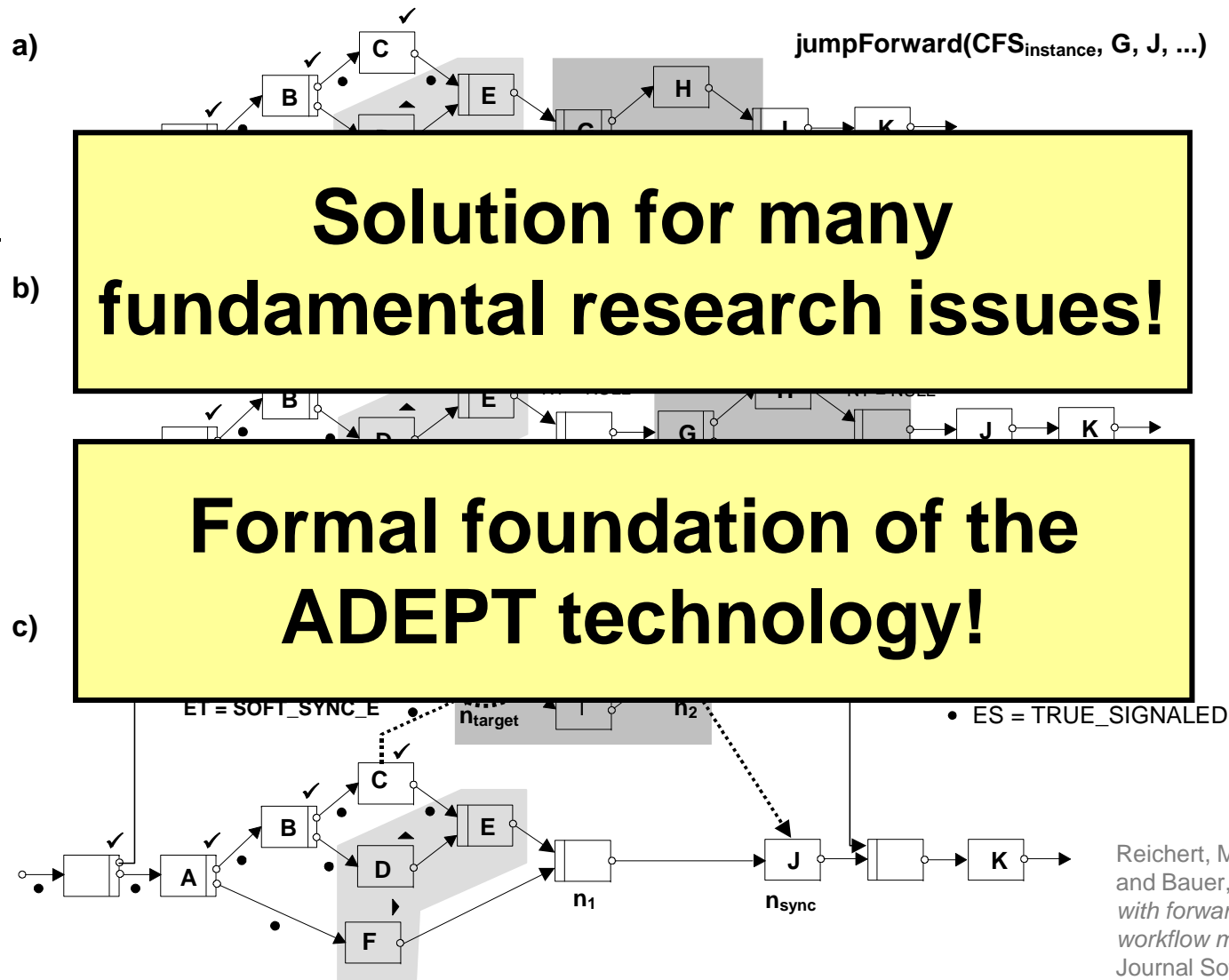


Ad-hoc Changes: User Assistance

- ❑ Annotating changes with information about the reasons for the change
- ❑ Retrieval of similar past changes based on context information
- ❑ Reuse of changes through PAIS



Ad-hoc Changes: The ADEPT Framework

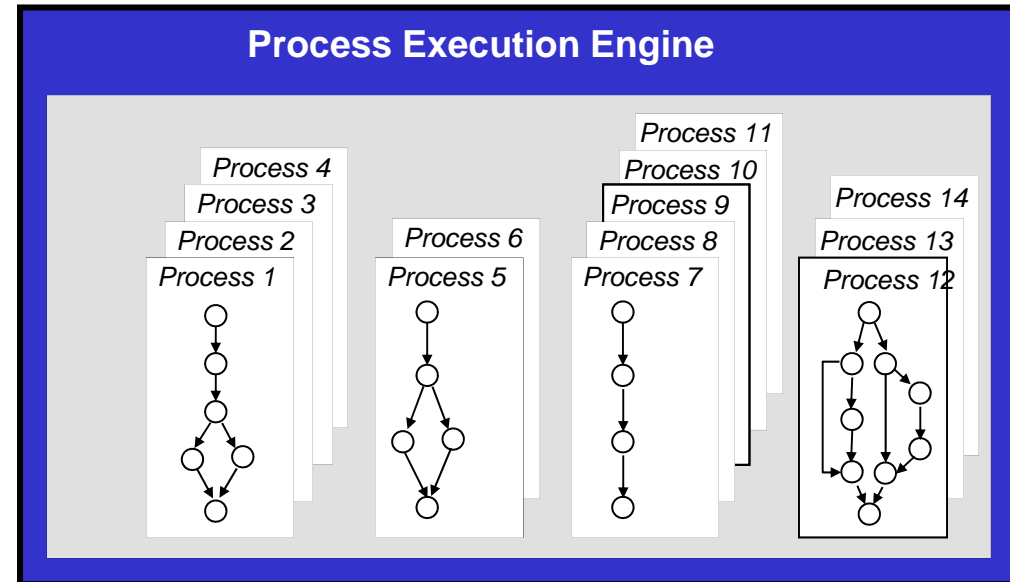


Reichert, Manfred and Dadam, Peter and Bauer, Thomas (2003) *Dealing with forward and backward jumps in workflow management systems*. Int'l Journal Software and Systems Modeling (SOSYM), 2(1): 37-58

Ad-hoc Changes: The ADEPT Framework

ADEPT :

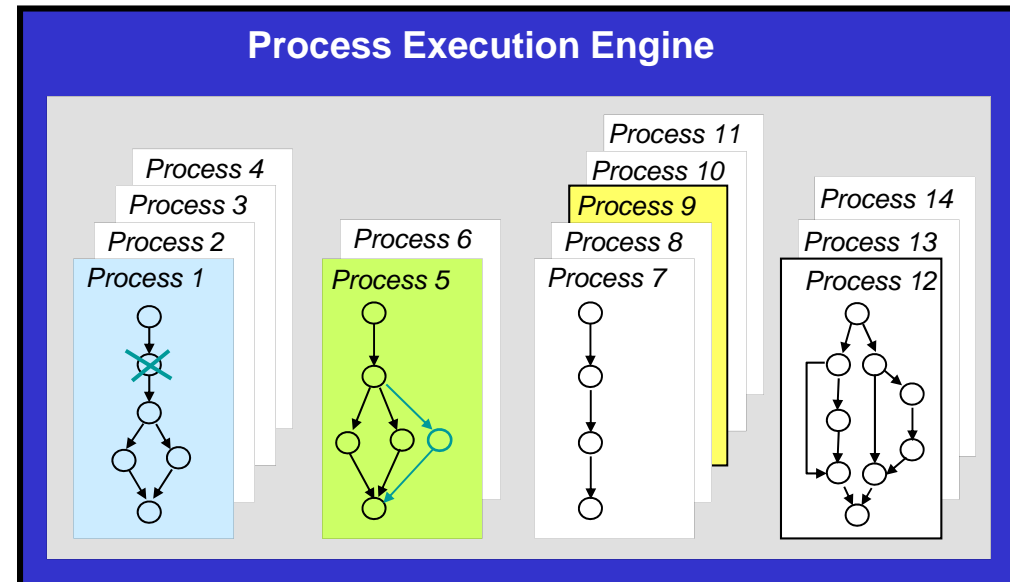
**Individually adaptable
Process Instances**



Ad-hoc Changes: The ADEPT Framework

ADEPT :

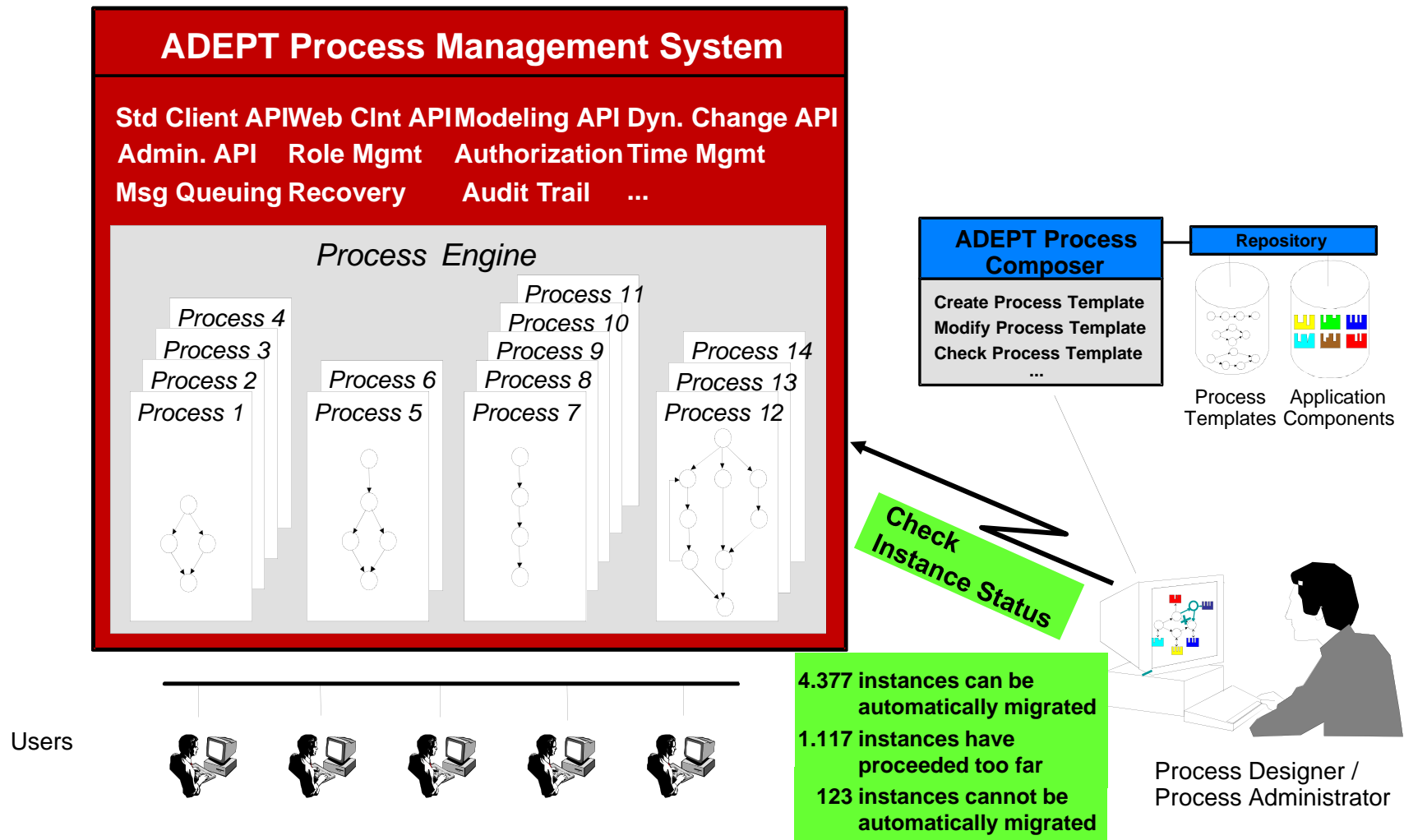
**Individually adaptable
Process Instances**



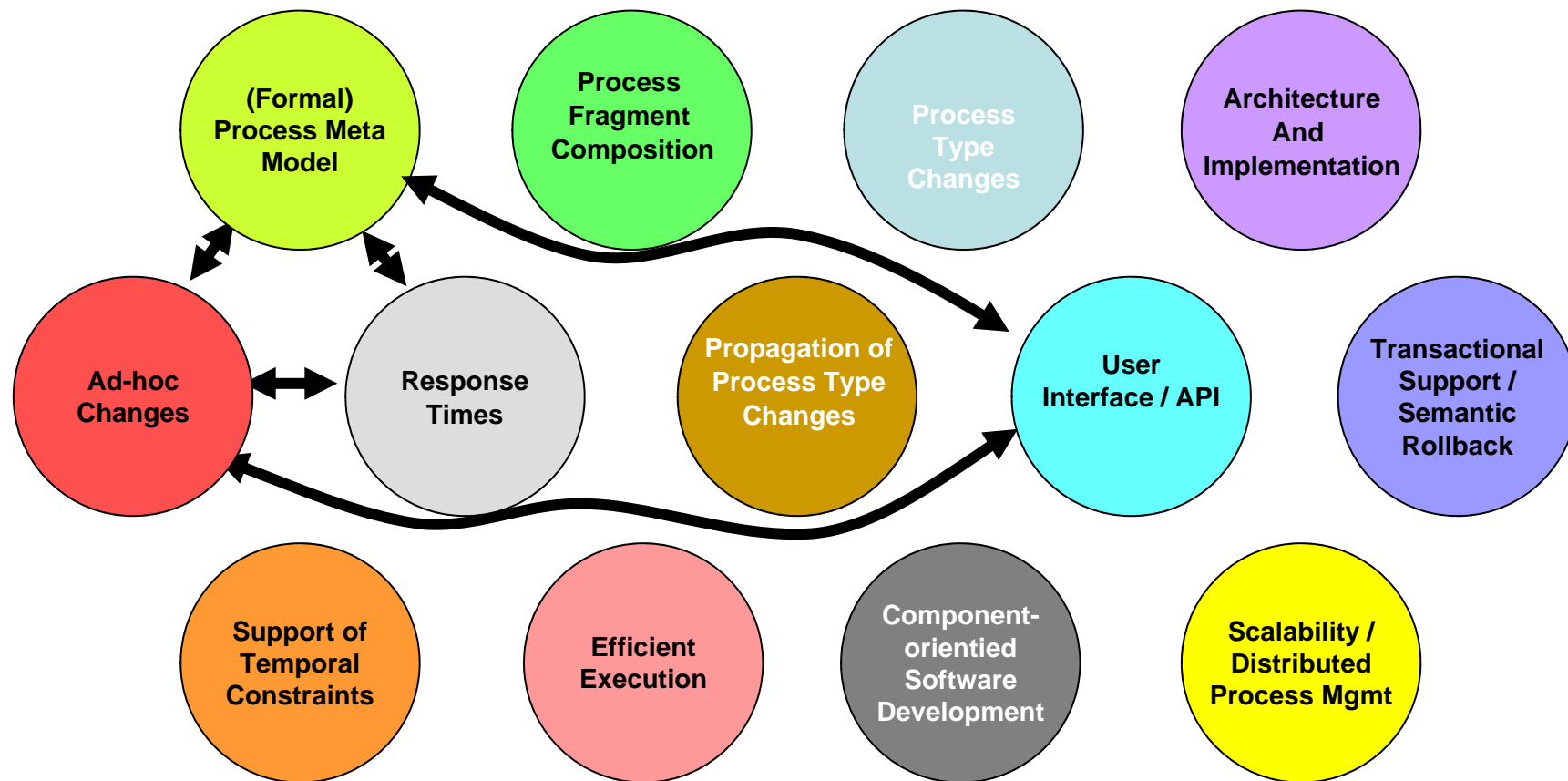
Achievements:

- **Formal process meta model** (expressive + restricted enough)
- **Formal Criteria for Change Correctness** (incl. „Theorems & Proofs“)
- **Efficient, build-in consistency checks** („no bad surprise“)
- **Support of a high number of change patterns**
- **API for accomplishing ad-hoc changes**

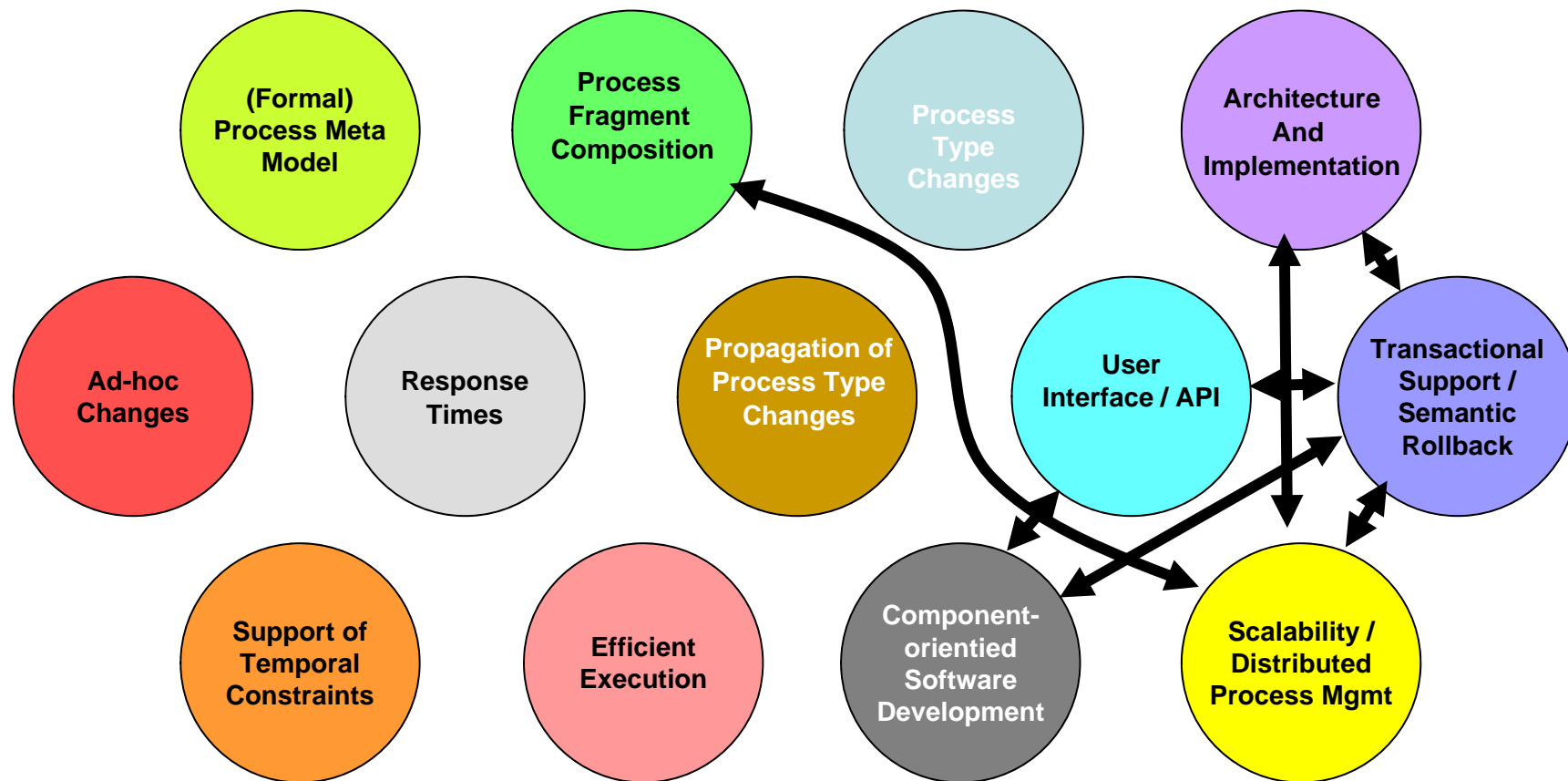
Process Schema Evolution



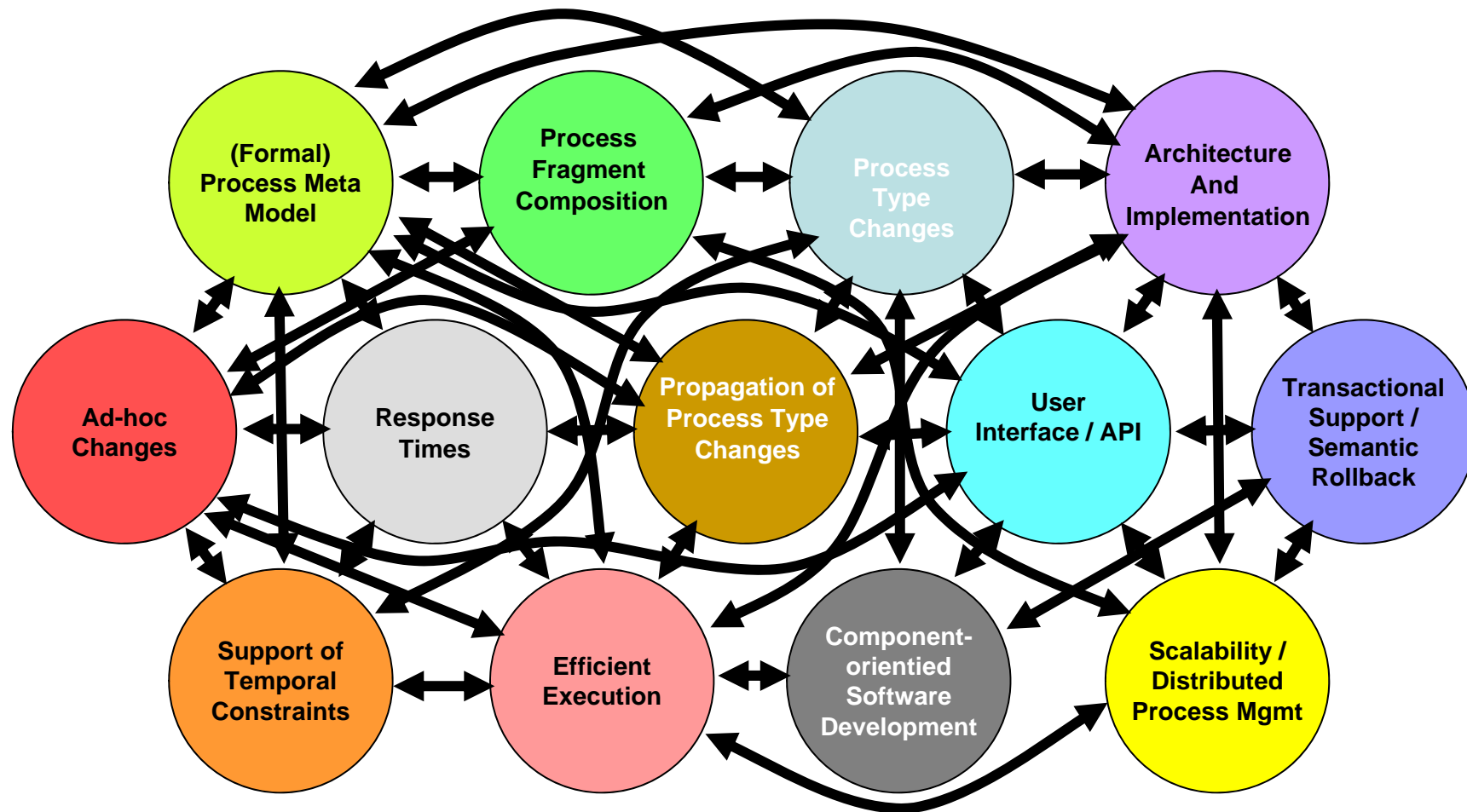
The ADEPT Approach



The ADEPT Approach



The ADEPT Approach



Transferring Adept to Practice



AristaFlow BPM Suite

The screenshot displays three main components of the AristaFlow BPM Suite:

- AristaFlow Process Template Editor:** Shows a workflow diagram with nodes like "Fill out Order Form", "Approve", and "New Request". It includes a left-hand tree view of the project structure and a bottom panel for "Node Basics" with fields for Name, Description, and Staff Assignment.
- AristaFlow Test Client:** Displays a table of work items. The table has columns for Name, Instance Name, Instance, State, Date of Assignment, Priority, Individual Priority, and Date of Completion. One item is visible: "Approve" with instance "OrderingProcess" and state "su...". Below the table is an "Attribute" section for the selected item.
- AristaFlow-Klient - supervisor (supervisor):** Shows a web-based interface for receiving customer requests. It includes a "Customer Data" section with fields for Customer name, street, and city. The "Customer Request" section has fields for Requested product and quantity. Buttons for "Confirm", "Suspend", "Reset", and "Fail and discard" are at the bottom.

Adaptive PAIS: Comparing Flexibility Frameworks

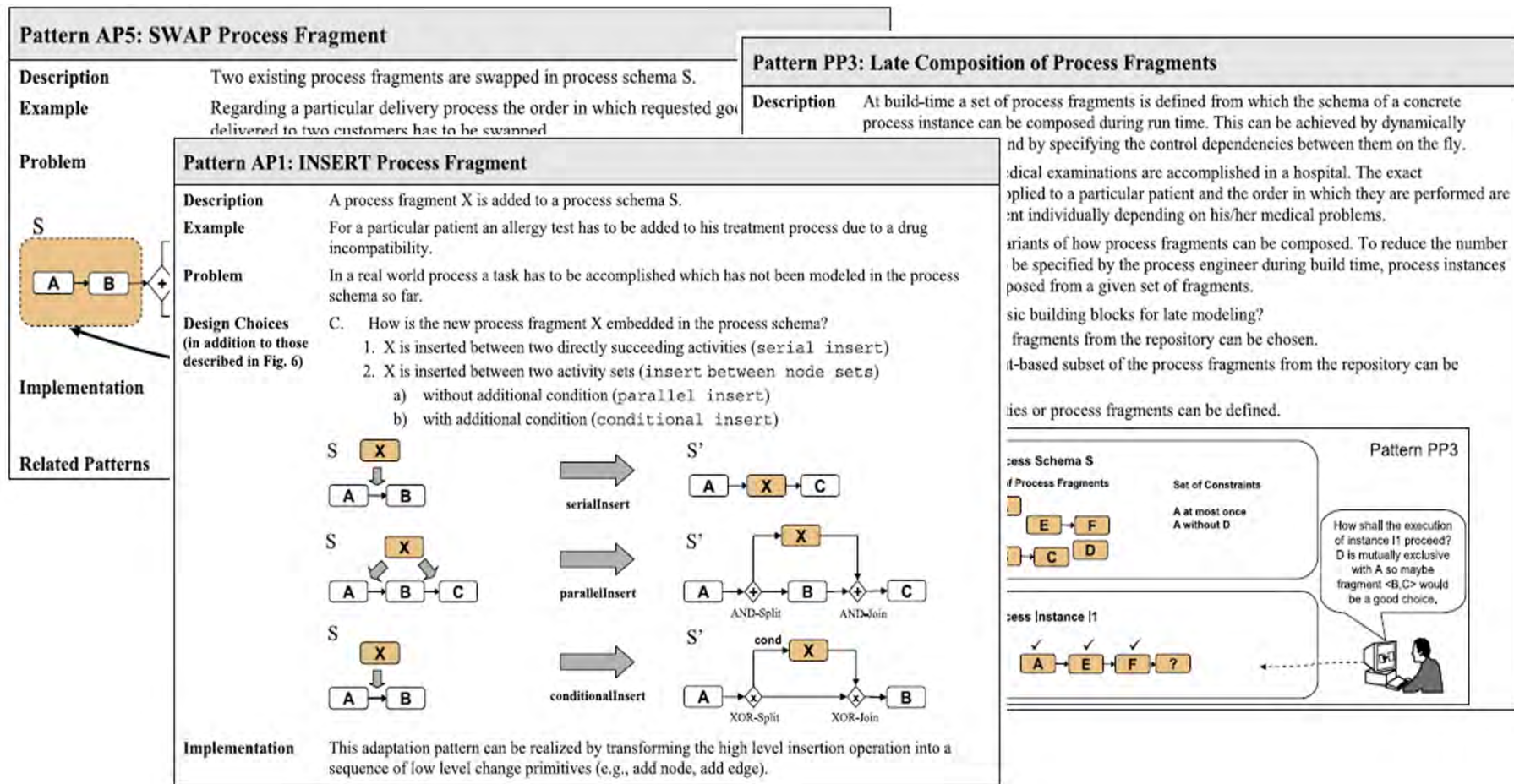
- ❑ Ability to deal with process changes is among the critical success factors for any process-aware information system (Mutschler et al. 2008)
- ❑ Several competing approaches to foster flexibility in process-aware information systems
 - Adaptive workflows (e.g., Reichert & Dadam 1998)
 - Case handling (e.g., van der Aalst et al. 2005)
 - Declarative processes (e.g., Pesic et al. 2007)
 - Late binding / Late Modeling (e.g., Sadiq et al. 2001)



Lack of methods for a systematic comparison

Adaptive PAIS: Comparing Flexibility Frameworks

Change Patterns



Adaptive PAIS: Comparing Flexibility Frameworks

Change Support Features

Schema Evolution, Version Control and Instance Migration

Support for Instance-Specific Changes

Correctness of Changes

Traceability and Analysis of Changes

Access Control of Changes

Change Reuse

Change Concurrency Control

Refactoring Support for Process Models

Adaptive PAIS: Comparing Flexibility Frameworks

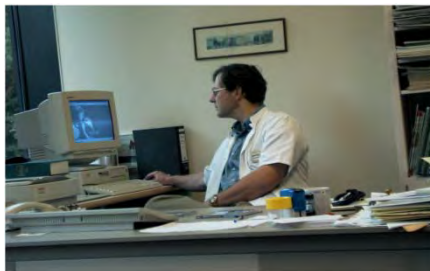
Primitive / Pattern	Academic								Commercial	
	ADEPT2 / CBRFlow	CAKE 2	HOON	MOVE	P o F	WASA2	WIDE	YAWL + Worklets / Exlets	Flower	Staffware
Change Primitives										
PR1 – Add Node	–	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
PR2 – Remove Node	–	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
PR3 – Add Edge	–	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
PR4 – Remove Edge	–	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
PR5 – Move Edge	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	+	–	–
Adaptation Patterns										
AP1 – Insert Fragment	A[1, 2], B[1,2,3], C [1, 2]	–	–	–	–	–	A[2], B[1], C[1,2]	–	–	–
AP2 – Delete Fragment	A[1, 2], B[1,2,3]	–	–	–	–	–	A[2], B[1]	–	–	–
AP3 - Move Fragment	A[1, 2], B[1,2,3], C[1,2]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP4 – Replace Fragment	–	–	–	–	–	–	A[2], B[1]	–	–	–
AP5 – Swap Fragment	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP6 – Extract Fragment	A[1,2], B[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP7 – Inline Fragment	A[1,2], B[2]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP8 – Embed Fragment in	A[1,2], B[1,2,3]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP9 – Parallelize Activities	A[1,2], B[1,2,3]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP10 - Embed Fragment in Conditional Branch	–	–	–	–	–	–	A[2]	–	–	–
AP11 – Add Control Dependency	A[1,2]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP12 – Remove Control Dependencies	A[1,2]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
AP13 – Update Condition	A[1,2]	–	–	–	–	–	A[2]	–	–	–
AP14 – Copy Fragment	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Applications



**Applying the ADEPT Technology
in Practice**

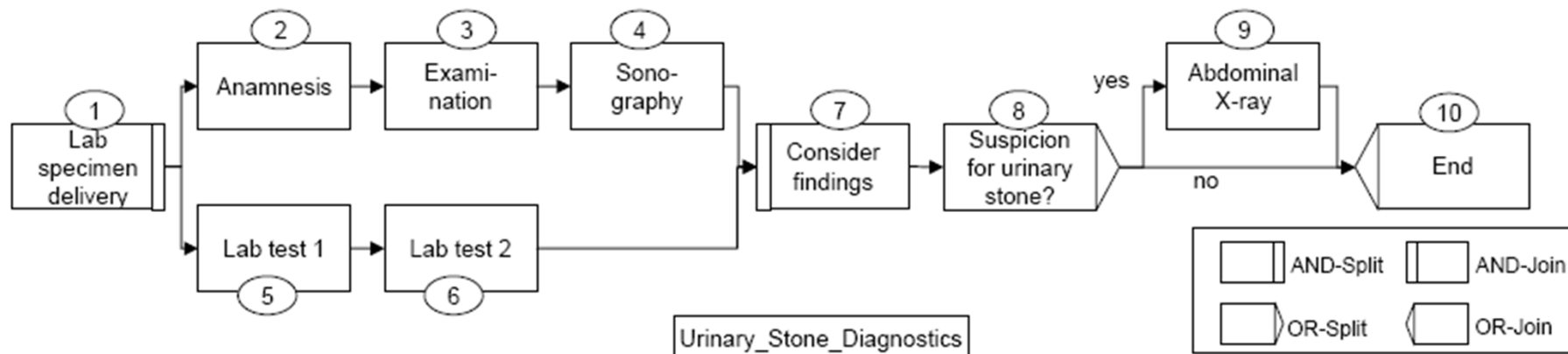
Enabling “Fluid Processes” with ADEPT: The Spot Project



Flexible Support of Clinical Pathways with ADEPT

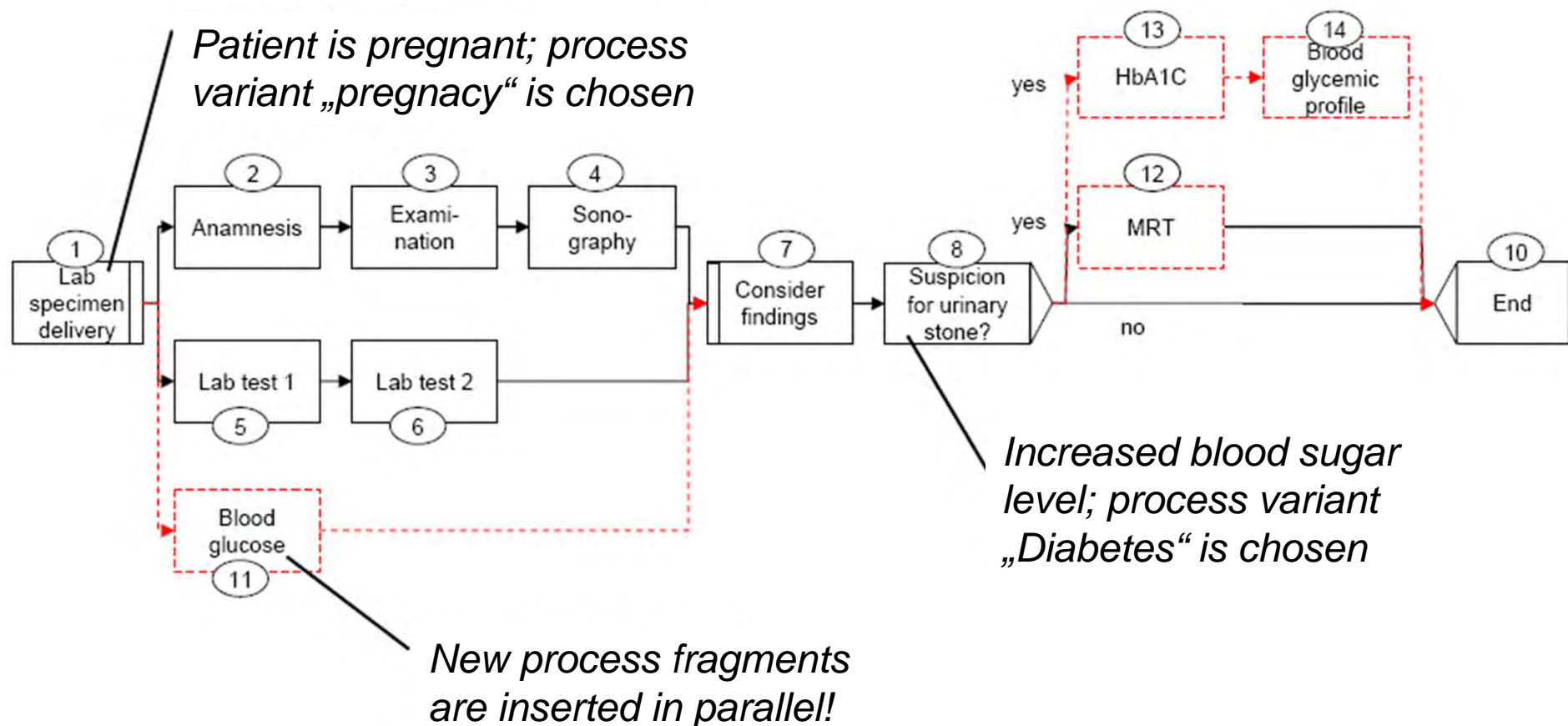
Partners:

Jan Neuhaus, Claudia Reuter
Fraunhoferinstitut Dortmund



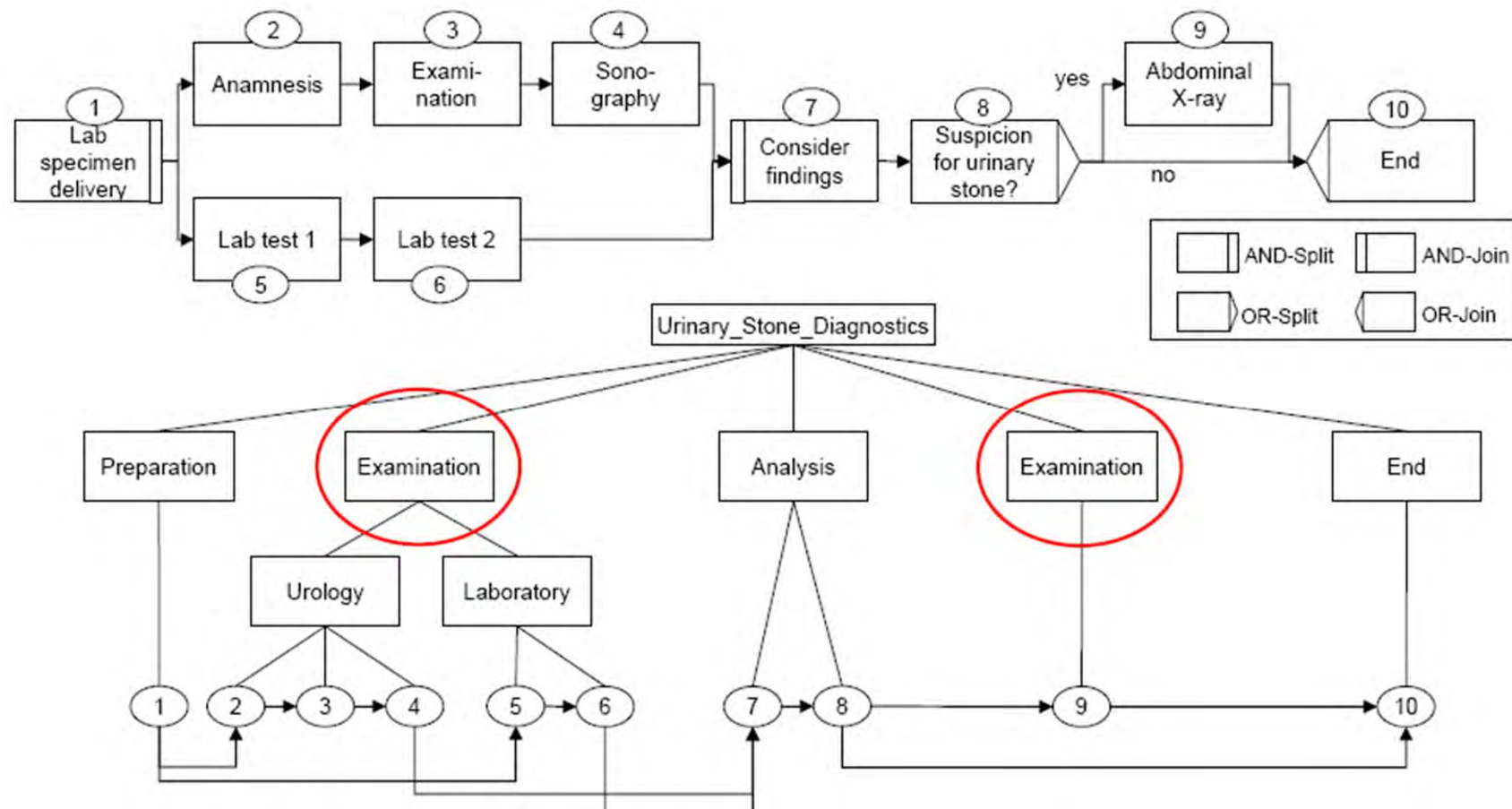
Enabling “Fluid Processes” with ADEPT: The Spot Project

Clinical pathways constitute “Fluid Processes” which need to be statically and/or dynamically configured to fit to the patient’s current situation!



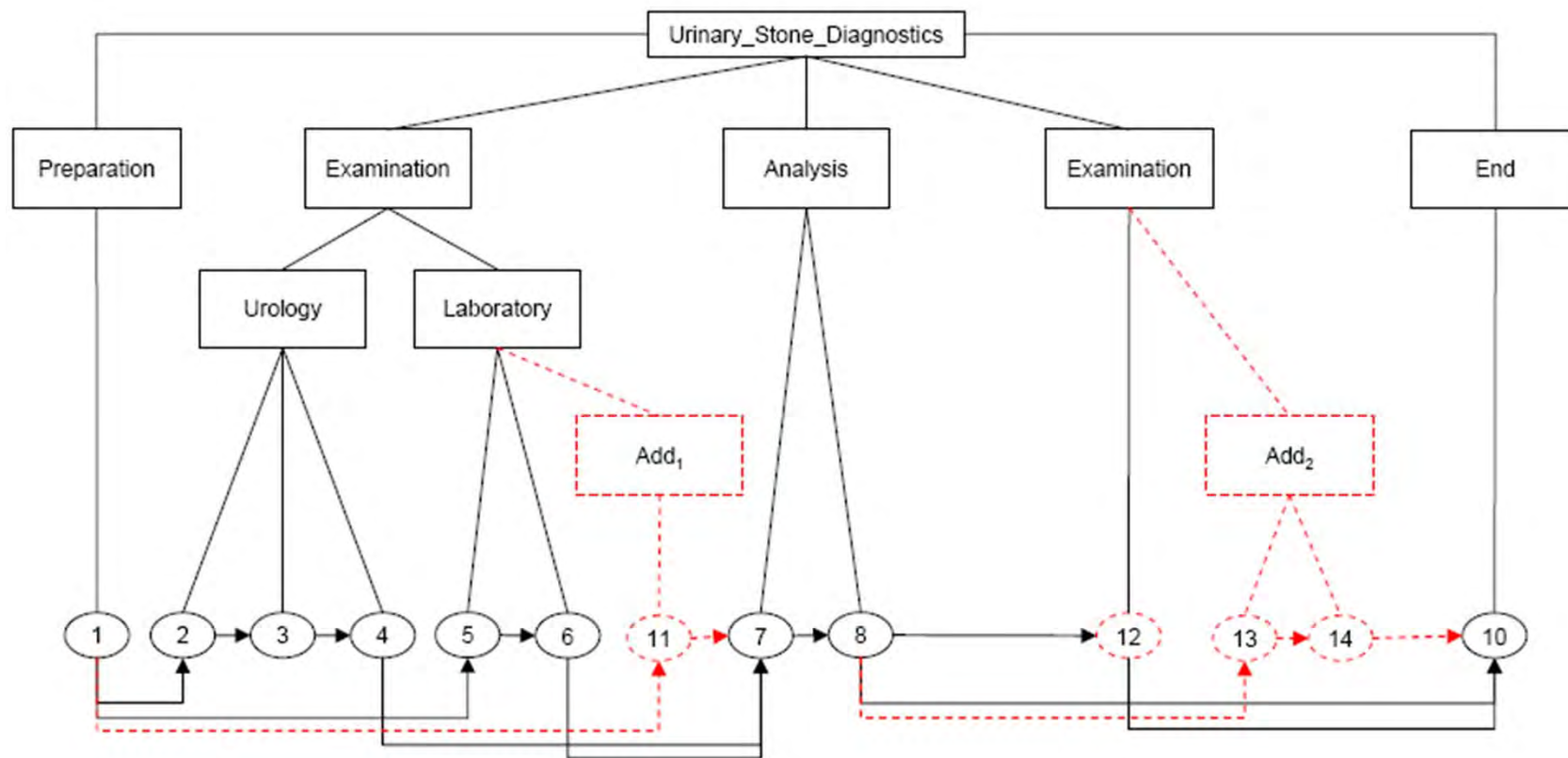
Enabling “Fluid Processes” with ADEPT: The Spot Project

The *Process Structure Tree* - Providing abstraction to end users



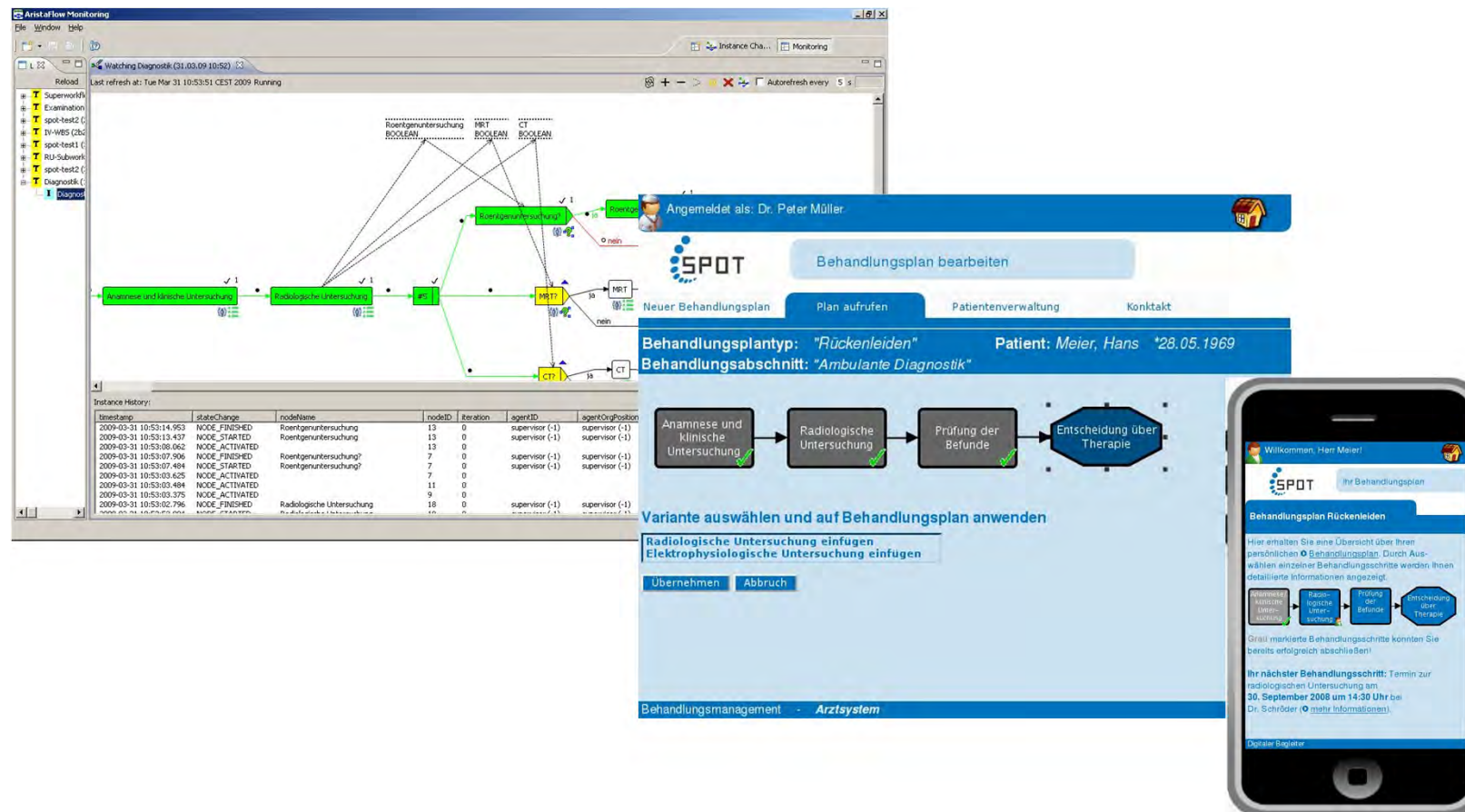
Enabling “Fluid Processes” with ADEPT: The Spot Project

The *Process Structure Tree* representing the patient-specific pathway!



Enabling “Fluid Processes” with ADEPT: The Spot Project

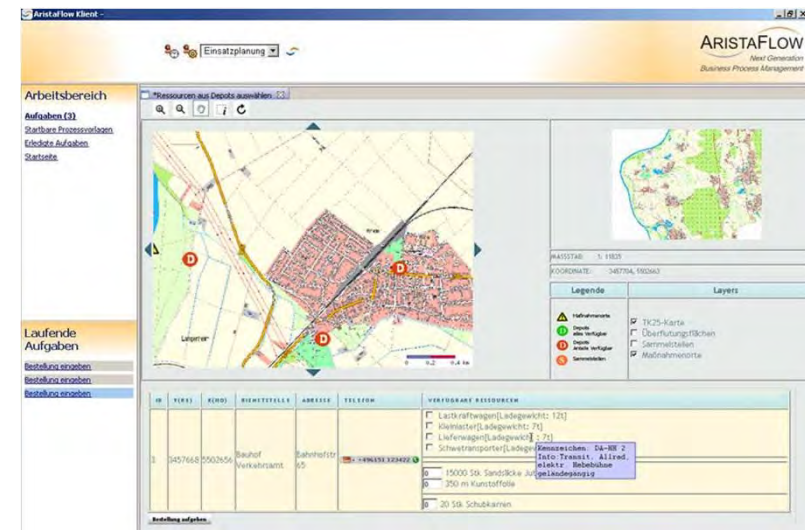
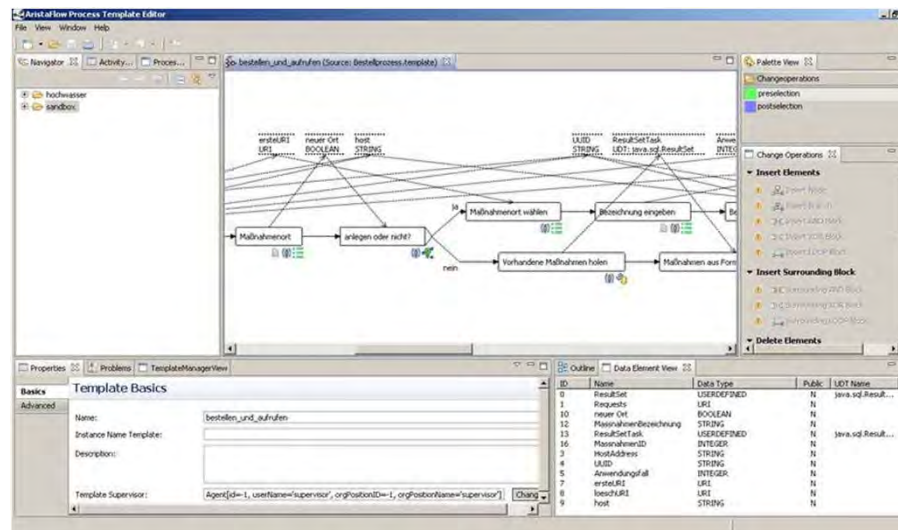
Proof-of-Concept Implementation Based on the ADEPT System



Enabling “Fluid Processes” with ADEPT: Disaster Management

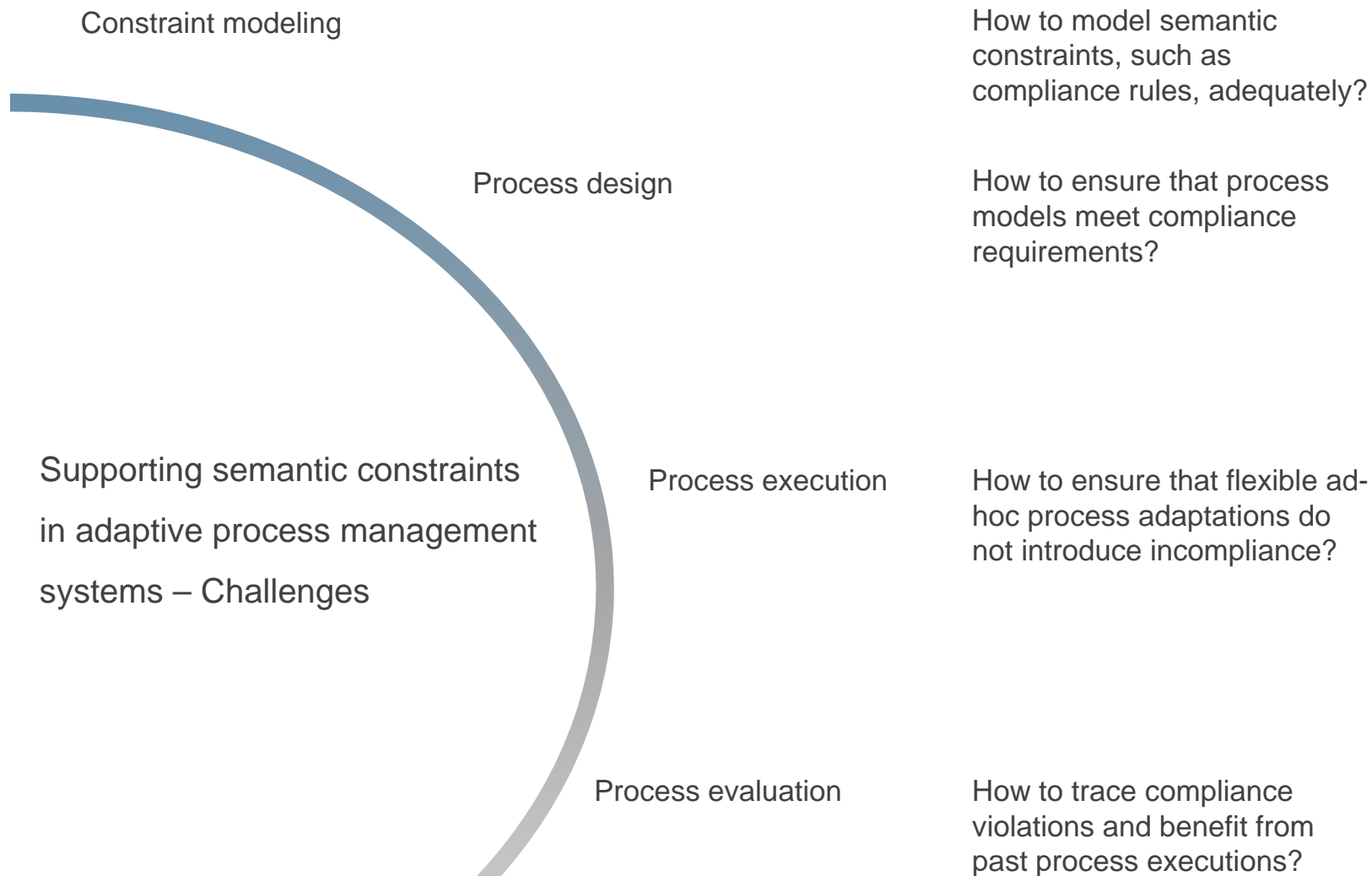
Process-aware, Cooperative Emergency Management for Water Infrastructures

Partner: TU Darmstadt





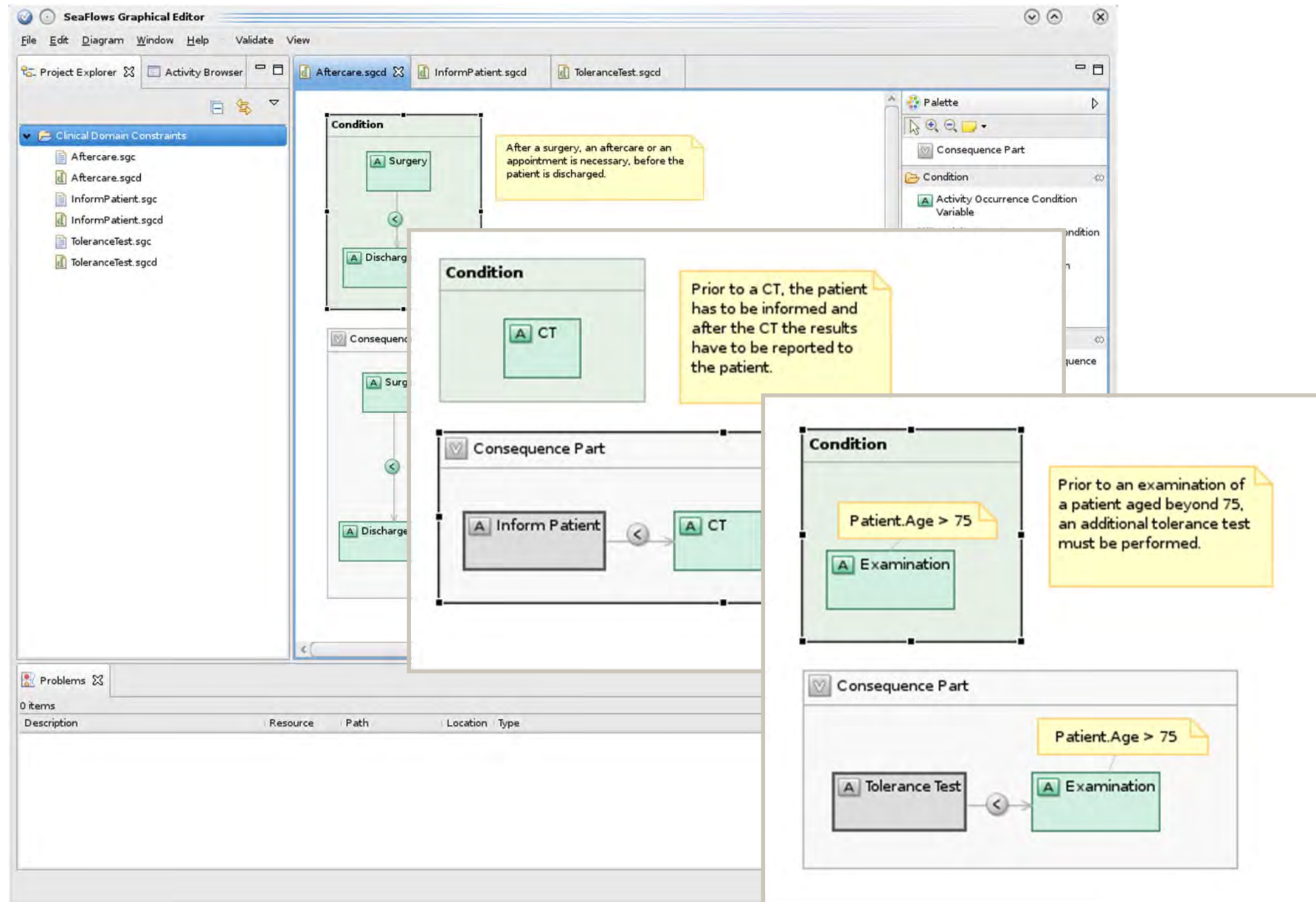
Semantically Constraining Possible Adaptations in Fluid Processes

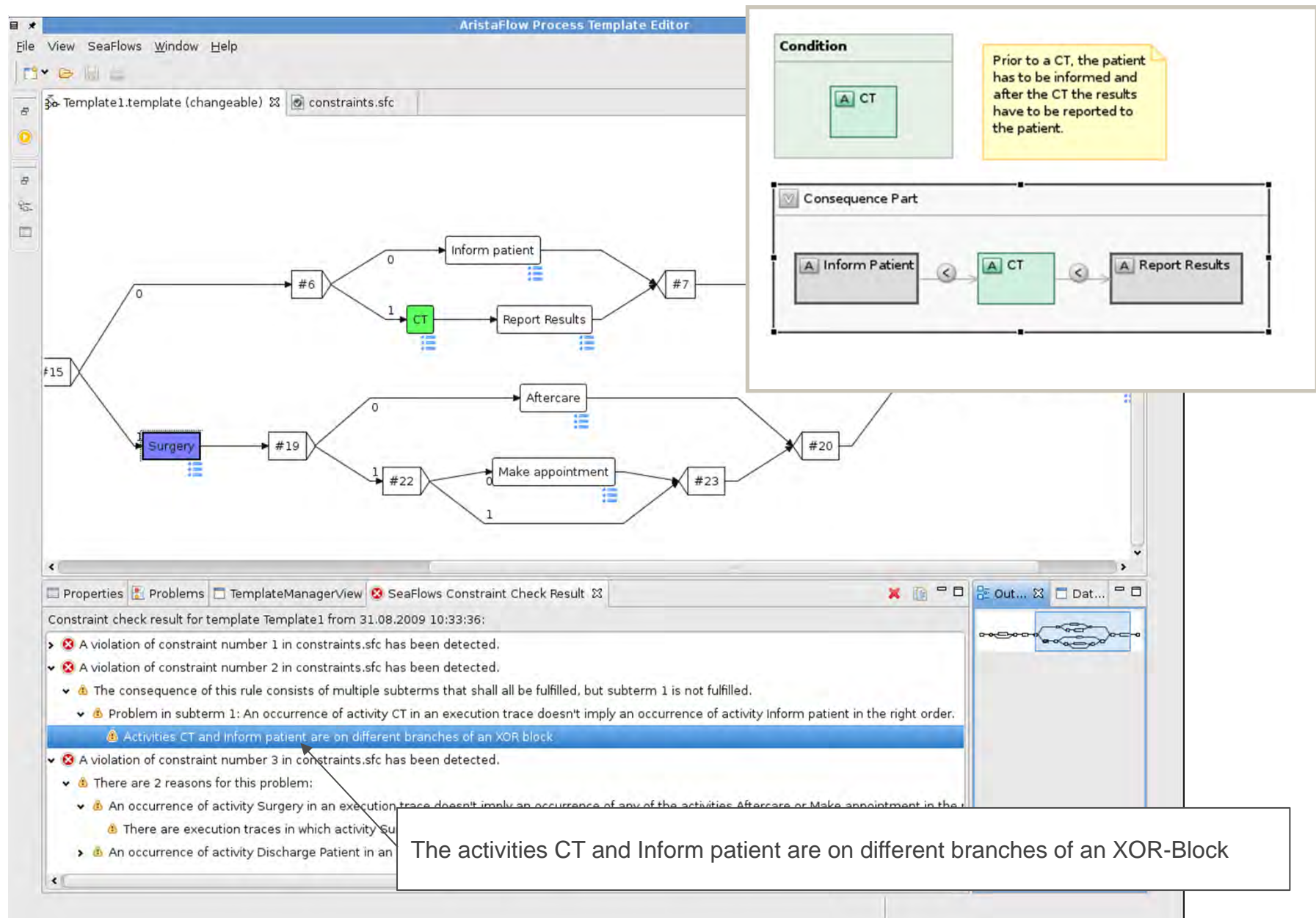


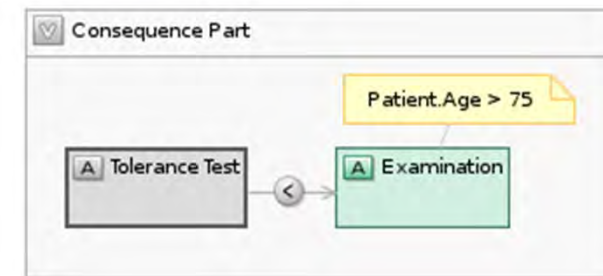
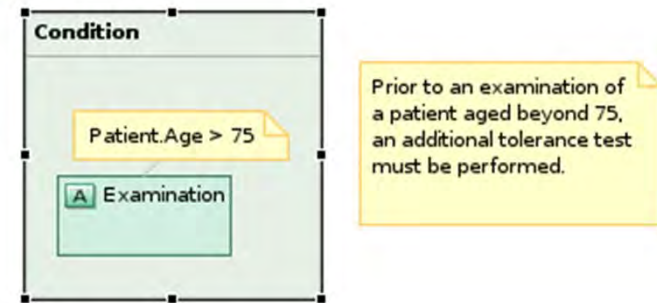
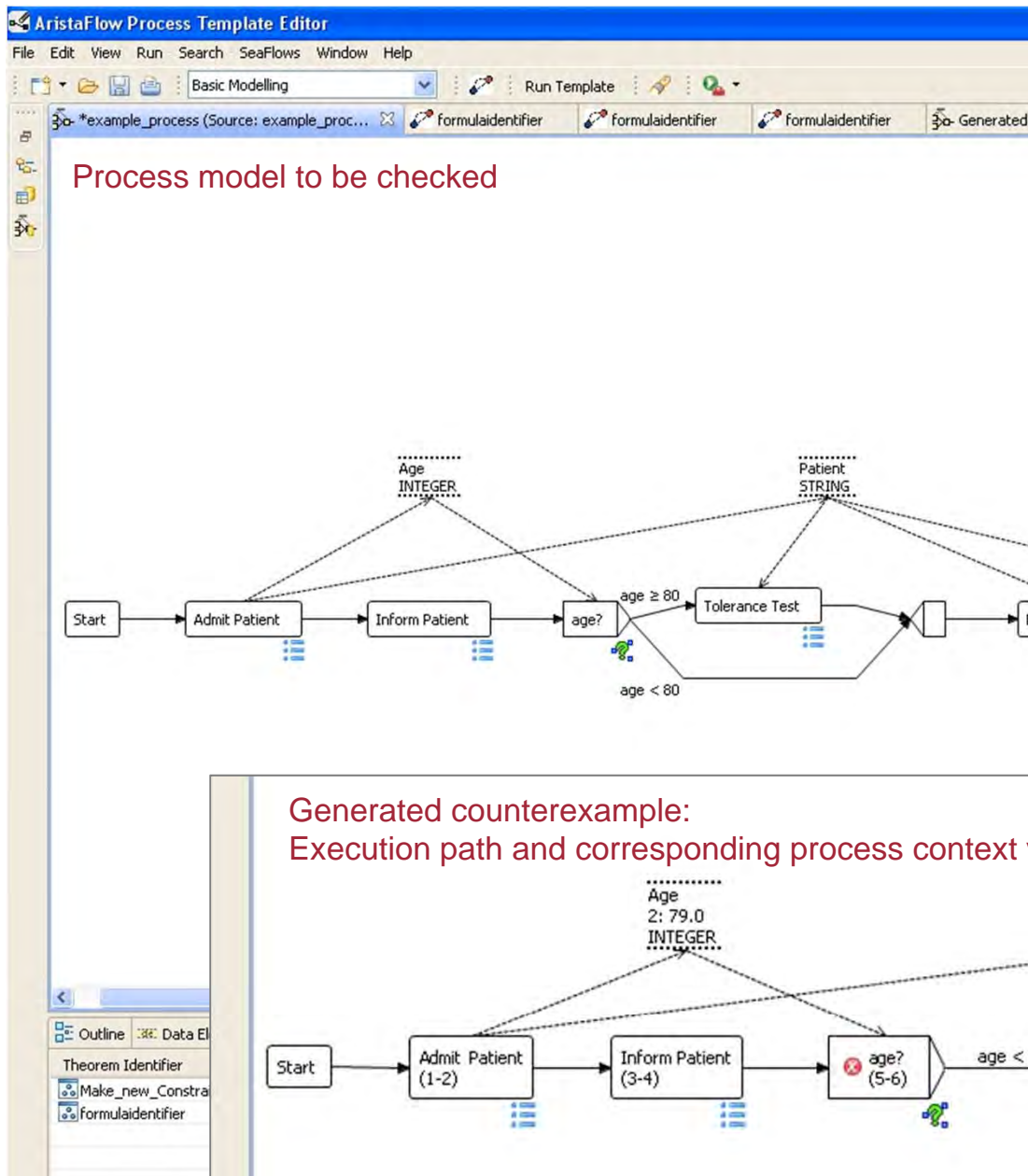


Ly, Linh Thao and Rinderle-Ma, Stefanie and Göser, Kevin and Dadam, Peter (2009) On Enabling Integrated Process Compliance with Semantic Constraints in Process Management Systems. Information Systems Frontiers

Ly, Linh Thao and Rinderle, Stefanie and Dadam, Peter (2008) Integration and verification of semantic constraints in adaptive process management systems. Data and Knowledge Engineering , Vol. 64, No. 1, pp. 3-23

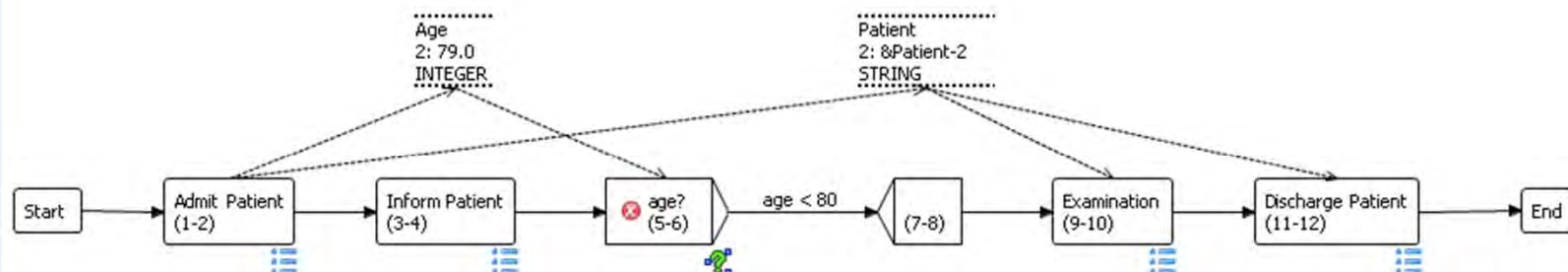




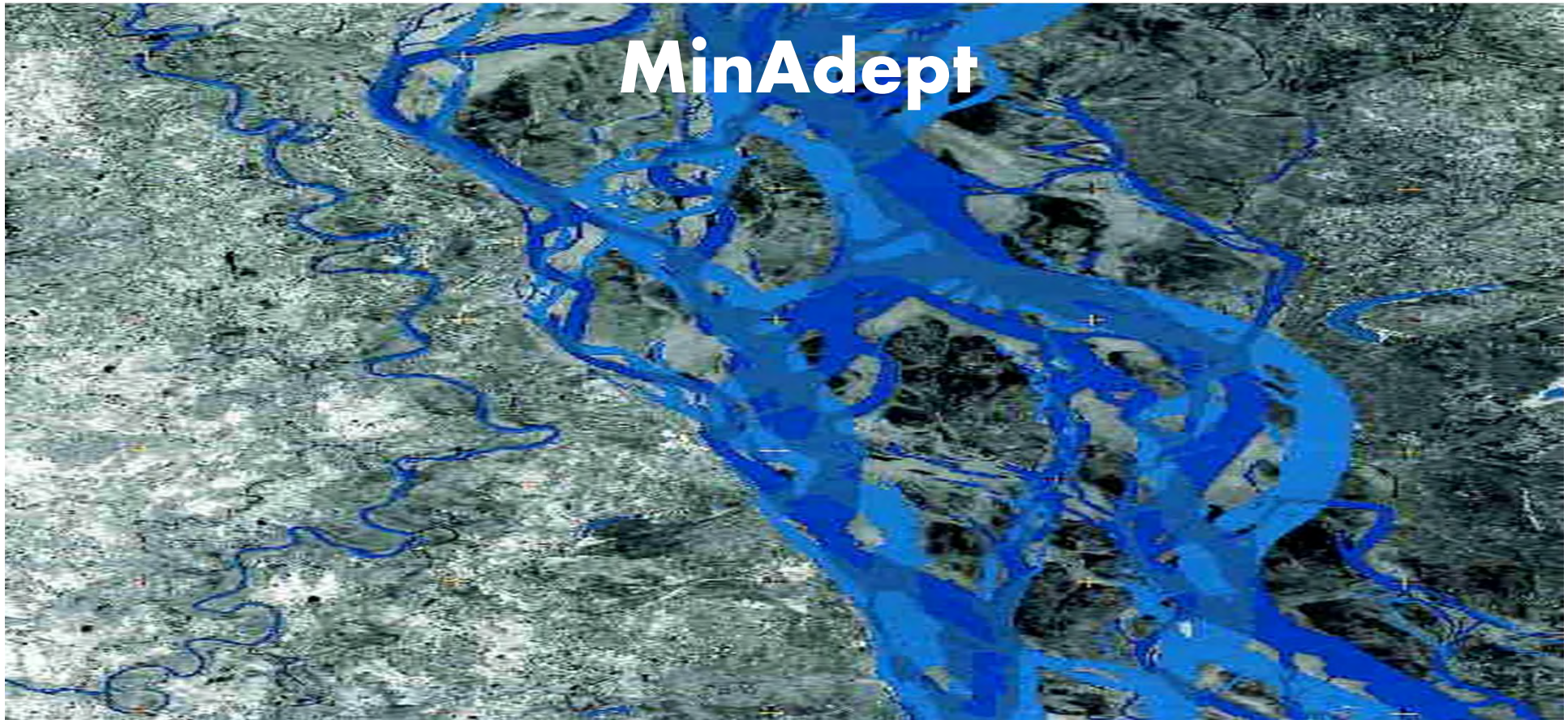


- Select Nodes
- Move Nodes
- Data Manipulation
 - Insert Data Element
 - Read Data Element

Generated counterexample:
Execution path and corresponding process context violating the constraint



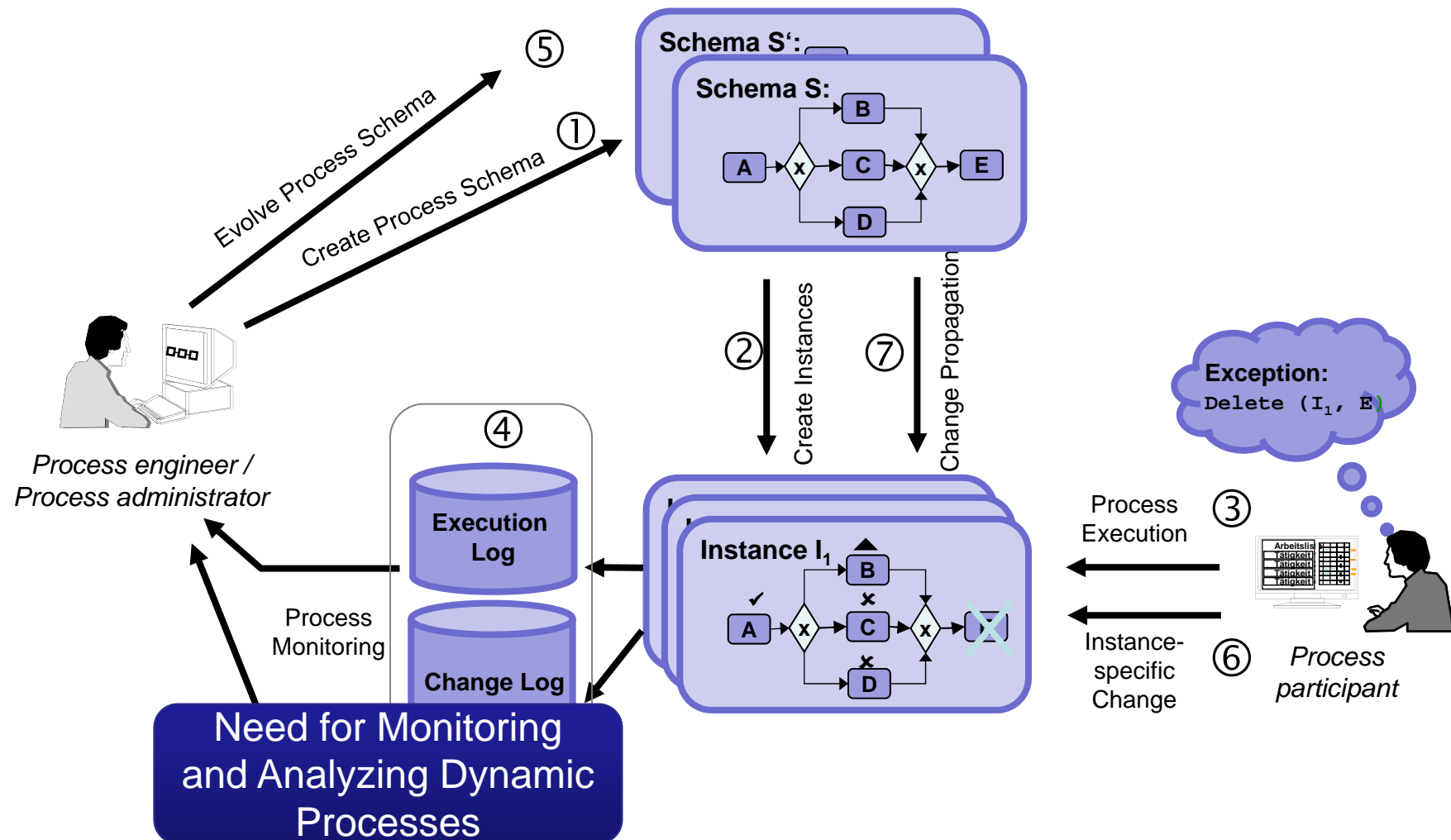
MinAdept



Changes in the Jamuna river (a branch of the Brahmaputra) in Bangladesh between March 1987 (shown in dark blue) and March 1989 (shown in light blue) and superimposed on a SPOT satellite basemap. Change monitoring made it possible to model the river's course and behaviour and to undertake preliminary studies to control flooding.

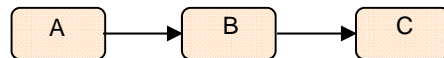
**Monitoring and Mining
Fluid Processes**

Monitoring and Mining „Fluid“ Processes



Execution and Change Logs of “Fluid Processes”

Original Schema S



Instance 4711

Activity	Event	User	Timestamp
	Instance Started	Garry	2007/09/08 15:00
A	Started	Garry	2007/09/08 15:30
A	Completed	Garry	2007/09/08 15:45
B	Started	Helen	2007/09/10 11:00
X	Started	Fritz	2007/09/11 09:01

Change Log Instance 4711 on Schema S

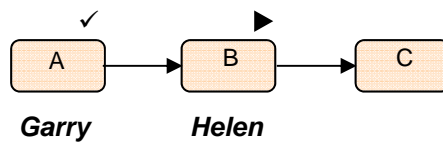
Change TX Applied Changes : User:Timestamp

001 InsertFragment[S;X,A,C]:Helen:2007/09/10 12:02

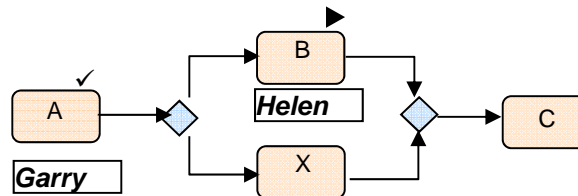
002 ReplaceFragment(S;C,Z):Jim:2007/09/11 09:31

Process Instance 4711

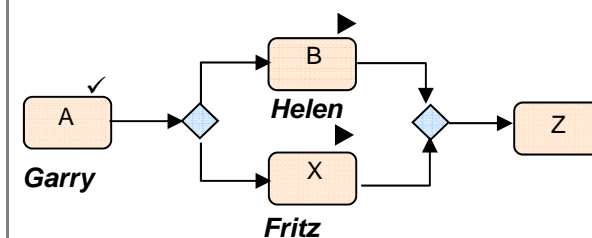
2007/09/10 11:00



2007/09/10 13:00

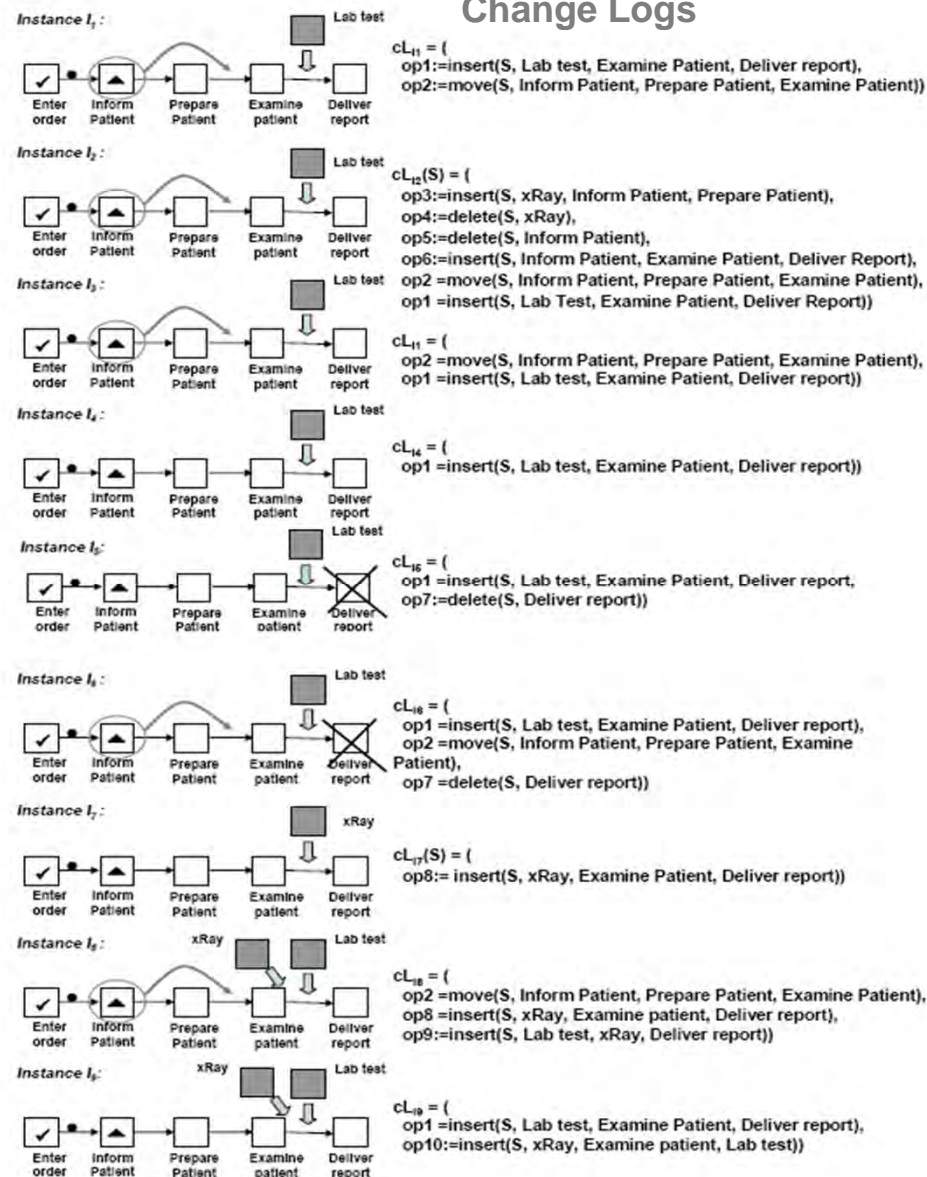


2007/09/11 10:00

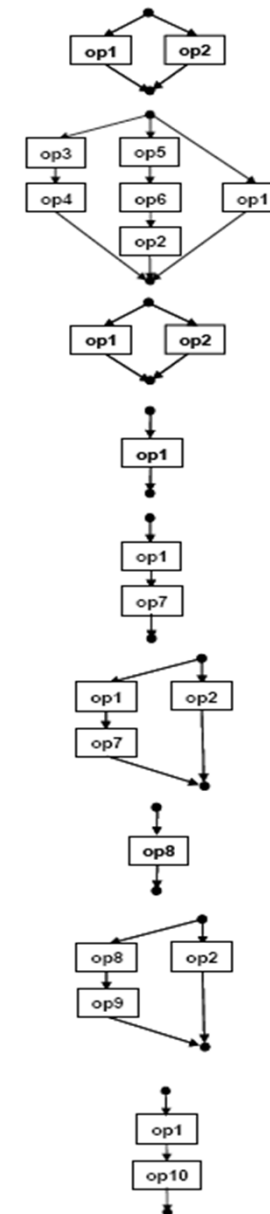


Change Analysis – A Simple Approach

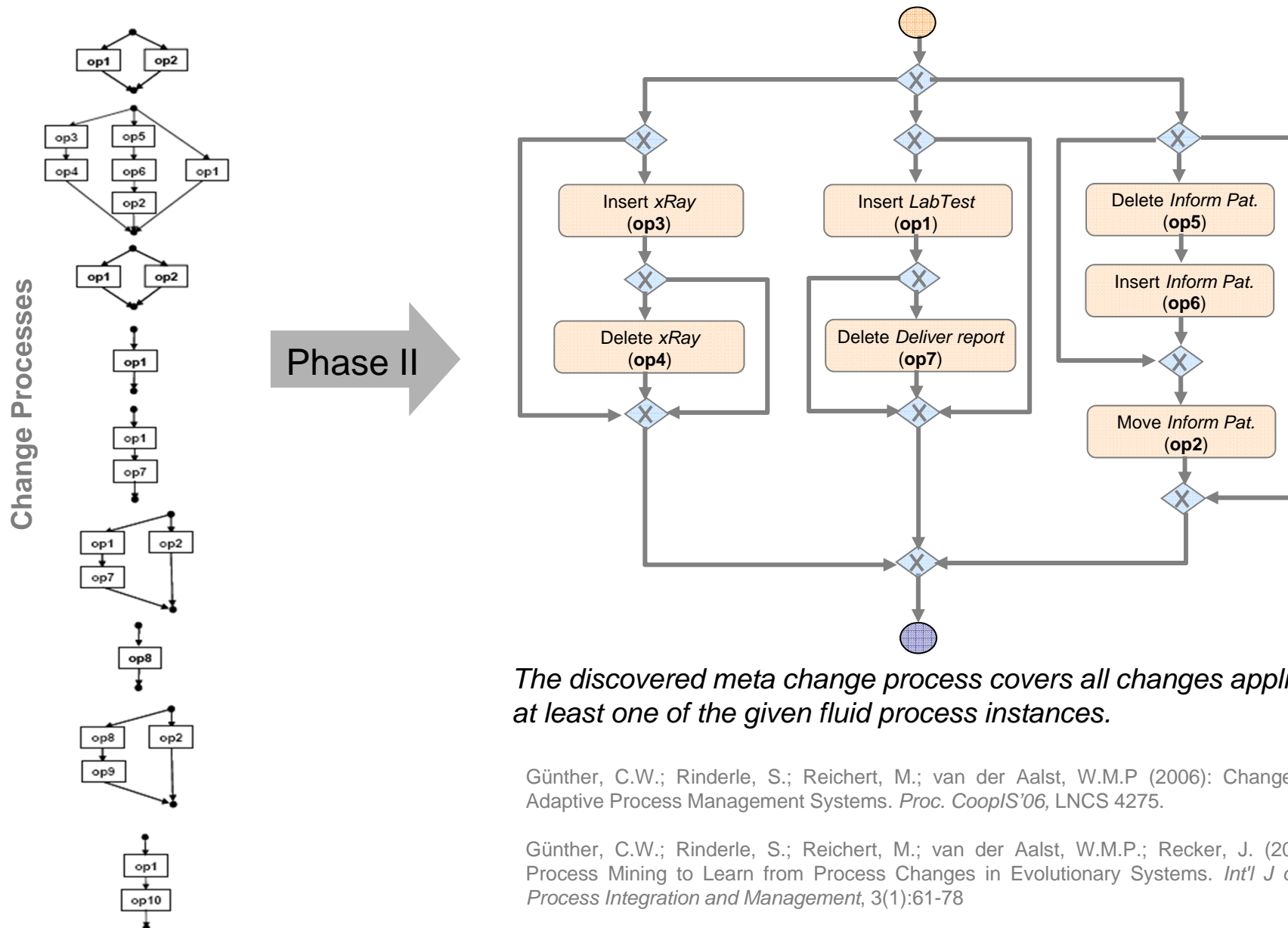
Fluid processes with instance-specific change logs



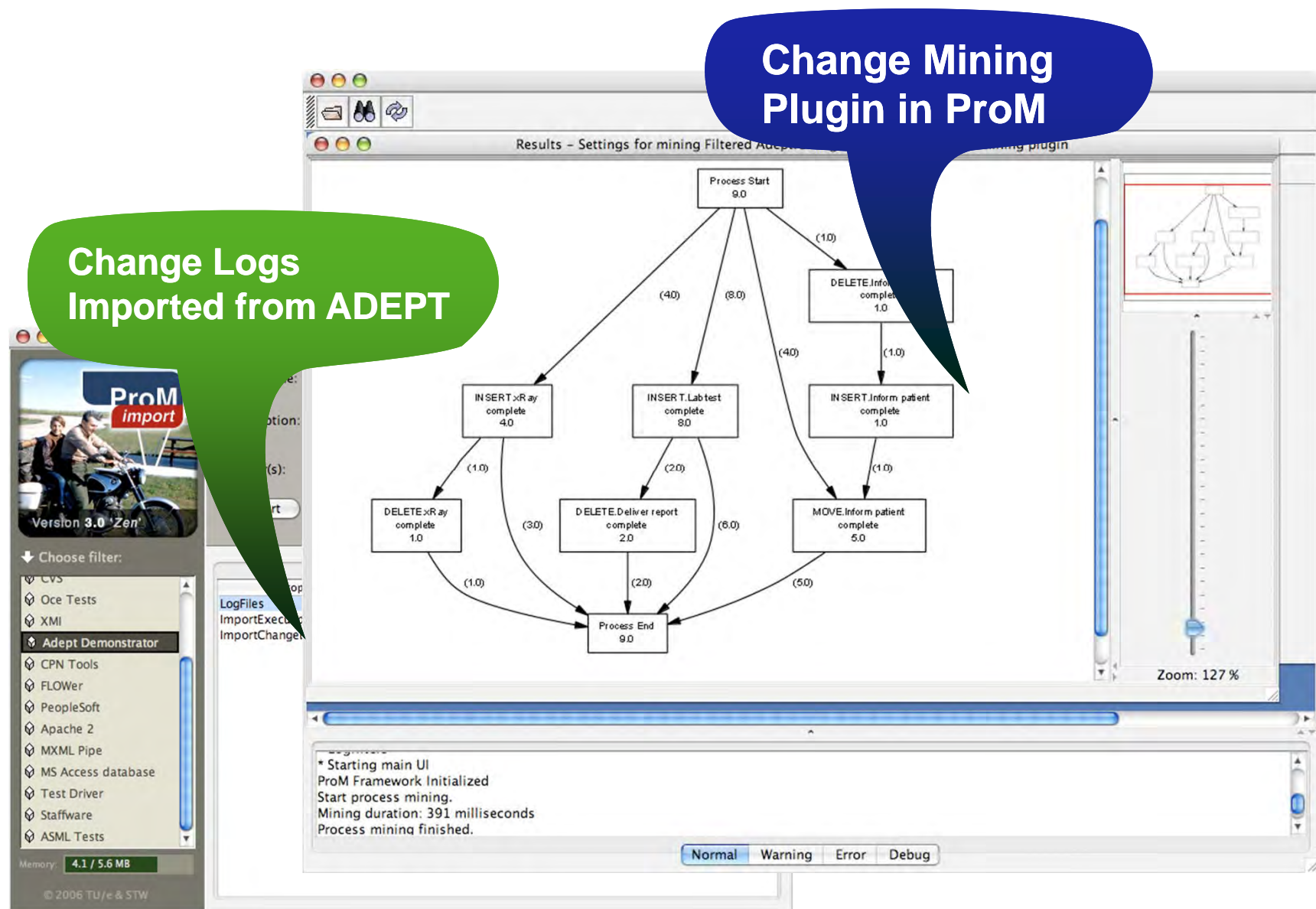
Phase I



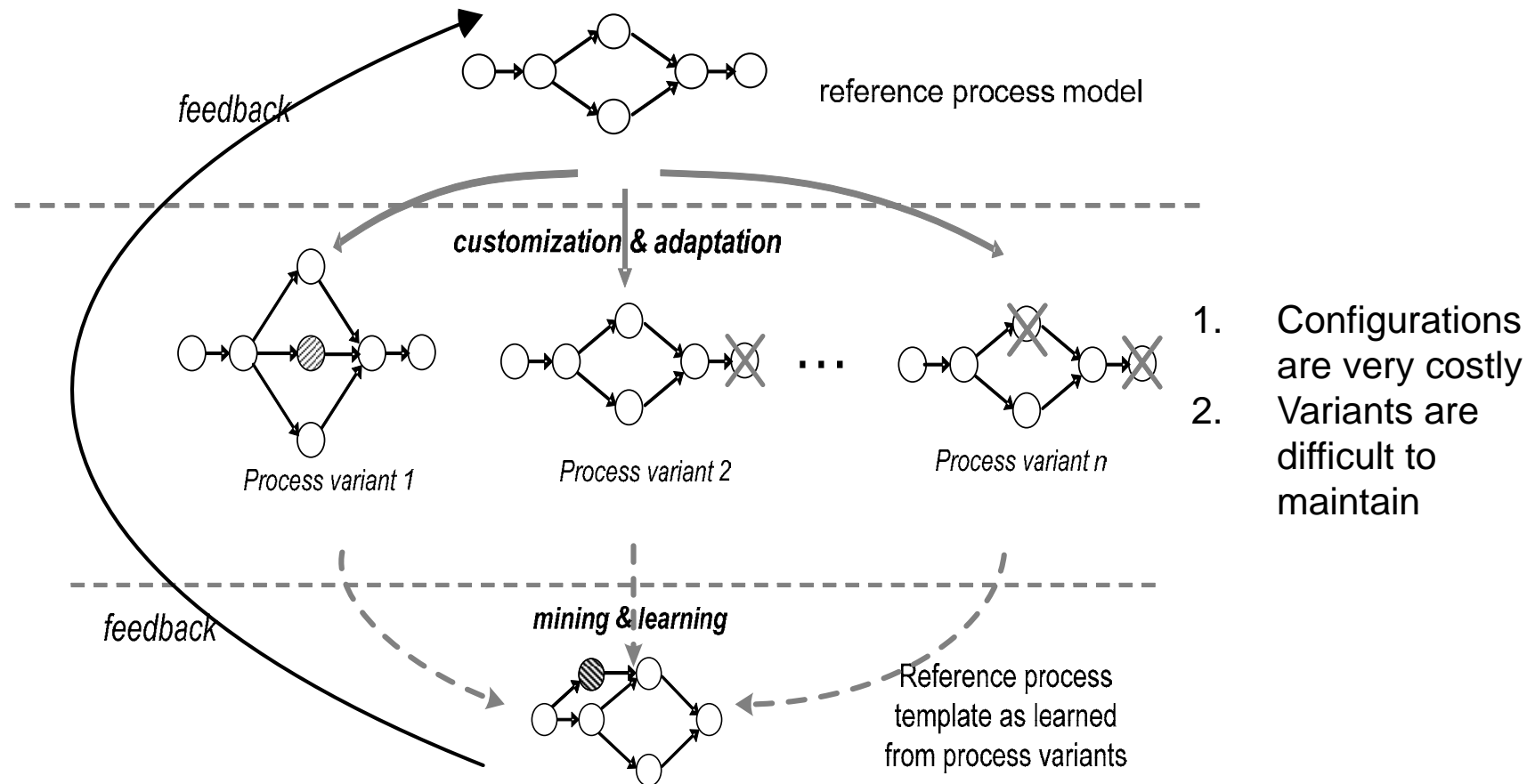
Change Analysis – A Simple Approach



Change Analysis – A Simple Approach (Proof-of-Concept Prototype)



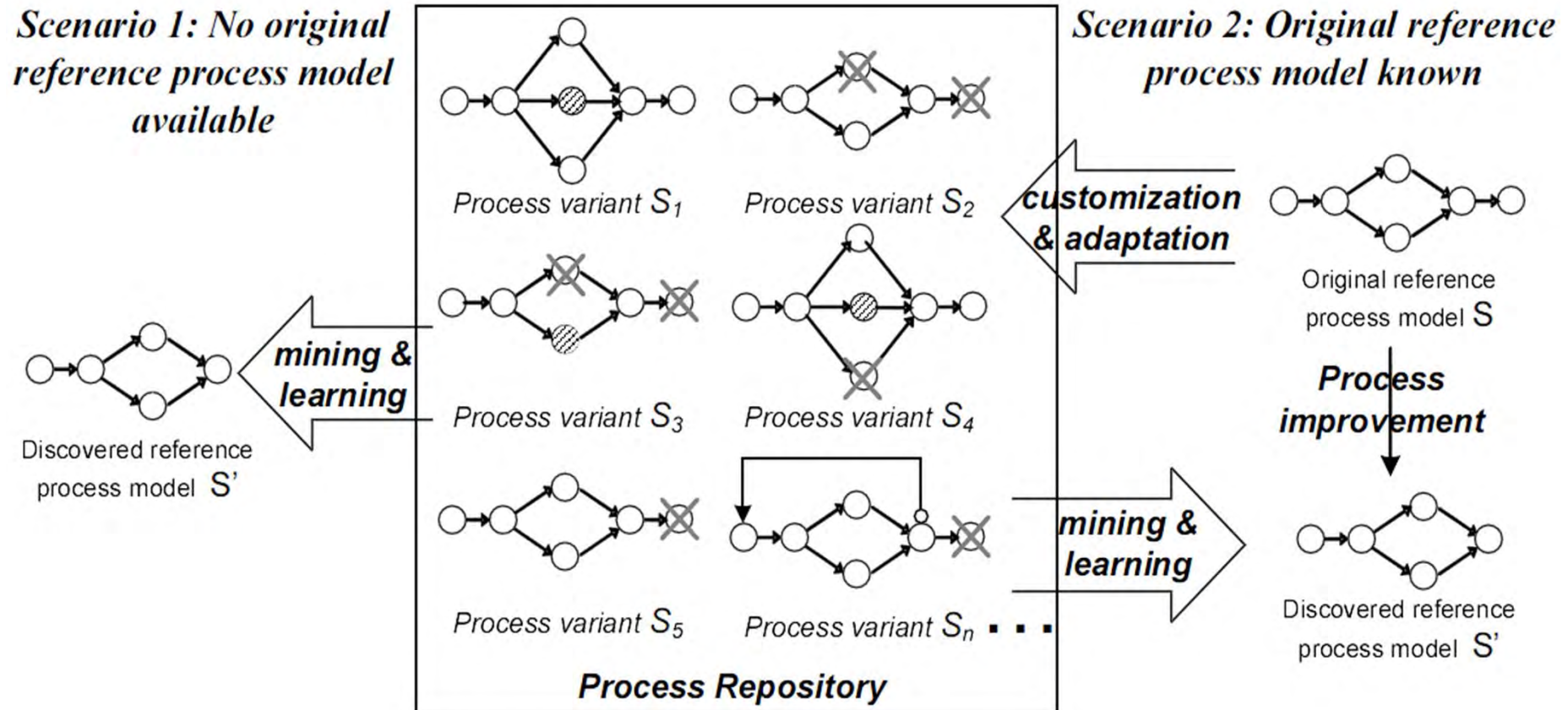
Process Variants Mining



Derive a new reference process model from the the variants such that:

Less adaptations are needed in future!

Process Variants Mining: Scenarios



Goal: Discover a (new) reference process model which requires less configuration efforts

Process Variants Mining: Basic Goal

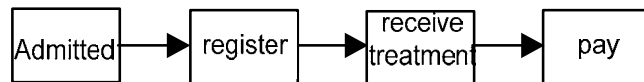
How to **discover a reference process model**

by mining a collection of **process (instance) variants**

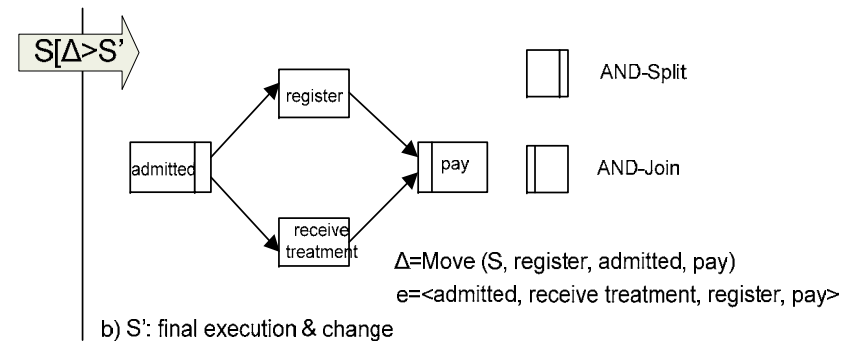
in order to

reduce the need of future process adaptations?

Process Variants Mining: Bias and Distance



a) S: original process model



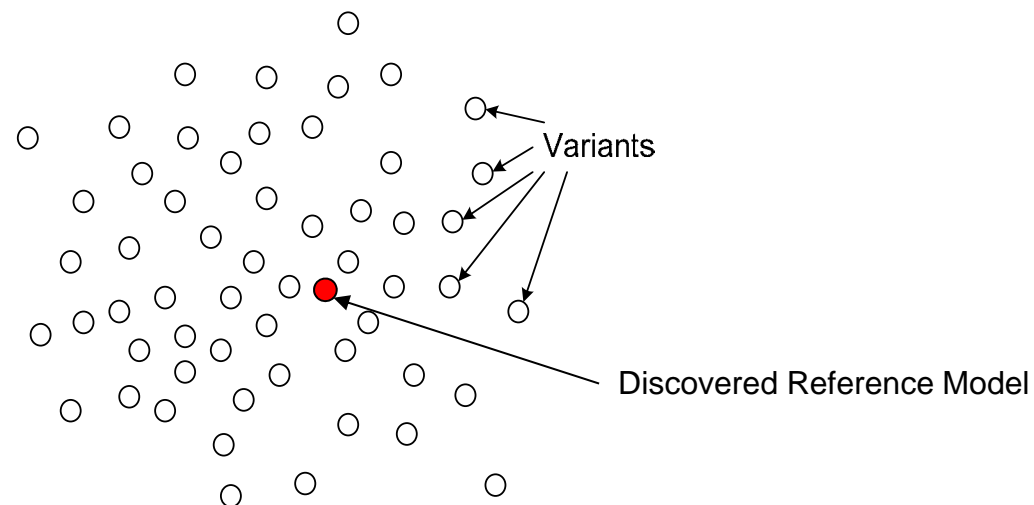
- ❑ **Process Bias:** Minimal set of high-level change operations needed to transform a given process model S into another model S'
- ❑ **Process Distance:** # change operations of any bias between S and S'; can be used to measure the complexity for process change

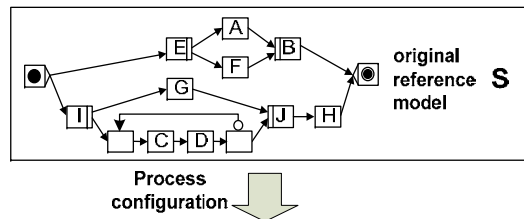
Process Variant Mining: Reformulated Goal

How to **discover a reference process model**

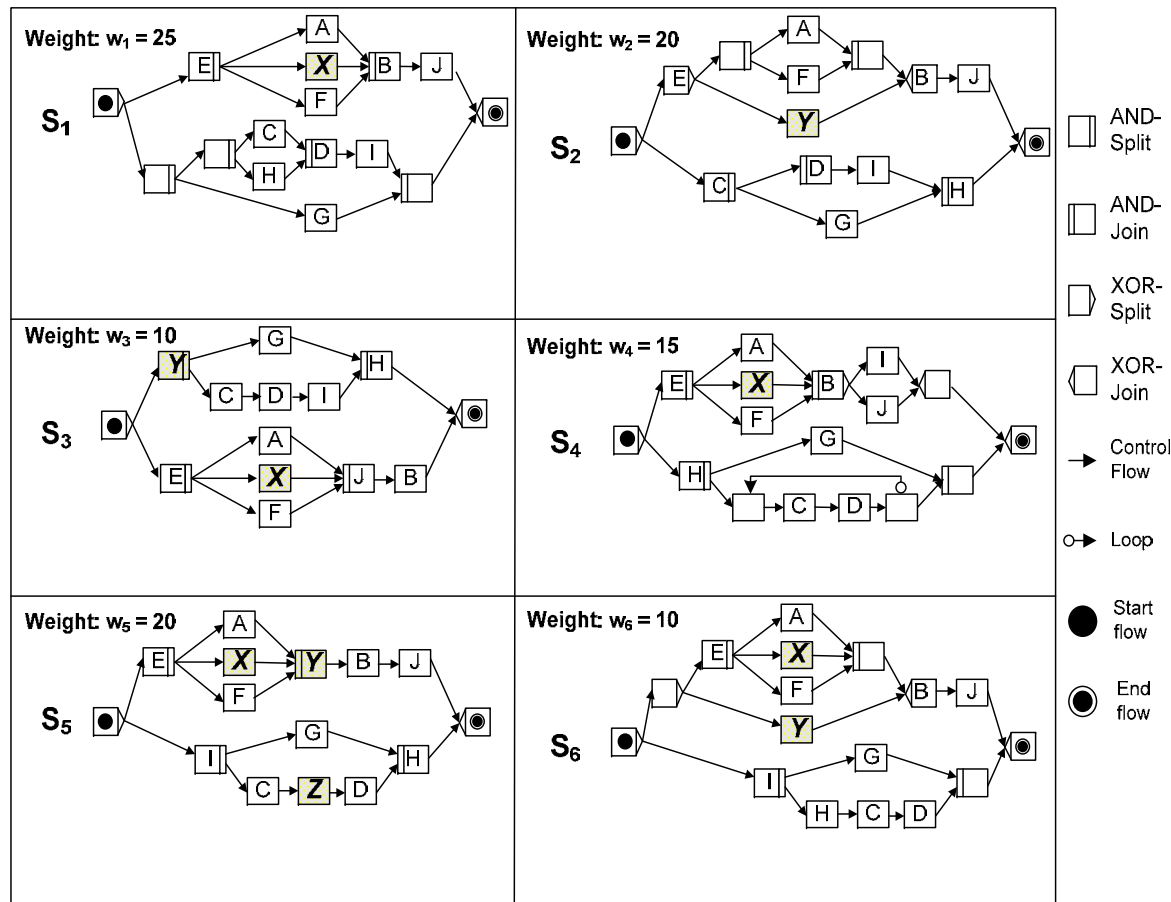
by mining **a collection of process variants**

such that this model has minimum **average distance to the process variants?**





Process Variant Mining: Illustrating Example



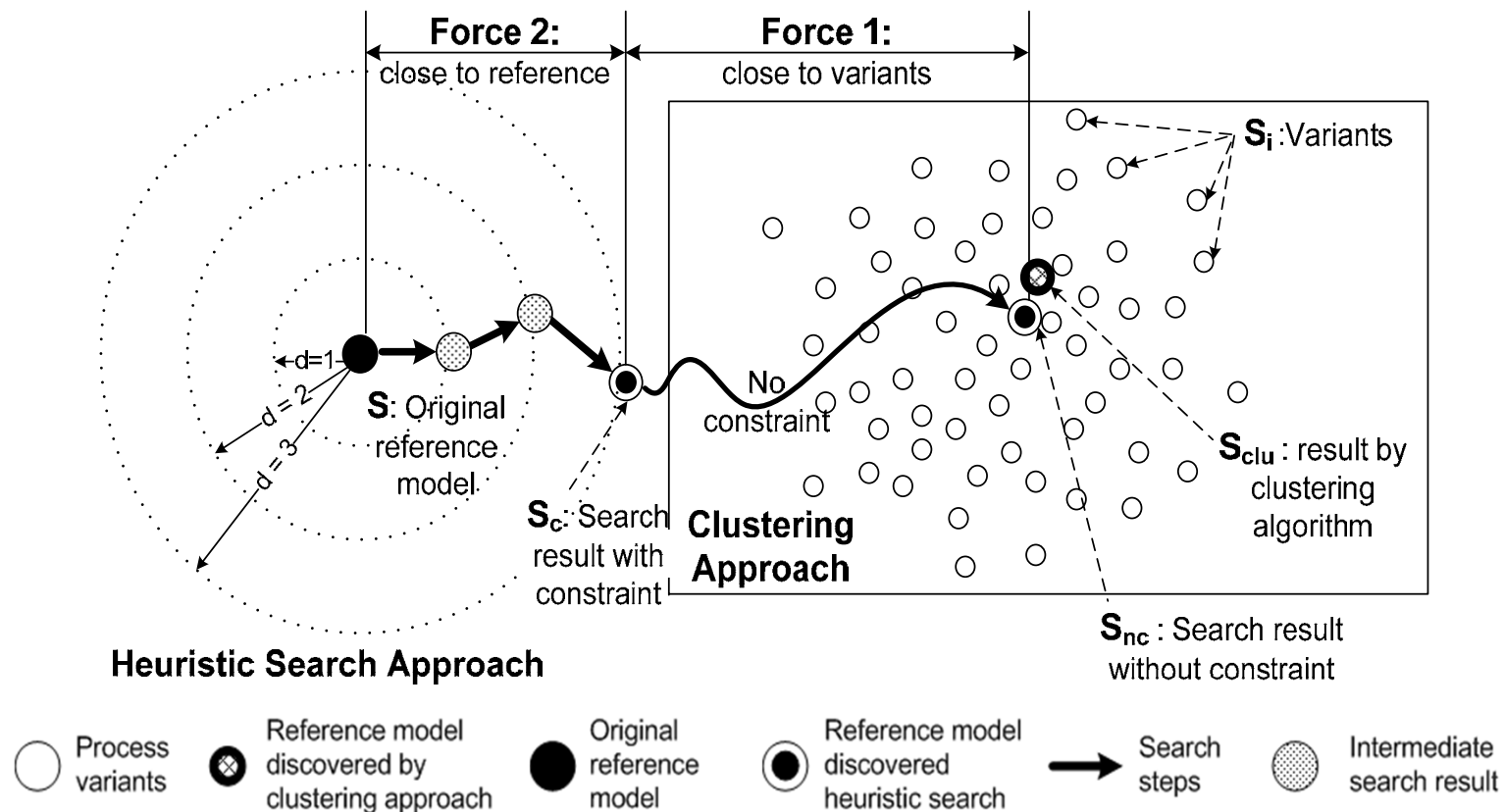
Process variants:

- Differ in activity sets
- Differ in process structure and used process patterns
- Differ in relative importance

Average weighted distance between S and variant models: 4,85

Goal: Can we find a process model which is *closer to the variants* than S?

Process Variant Mining: Scenarios

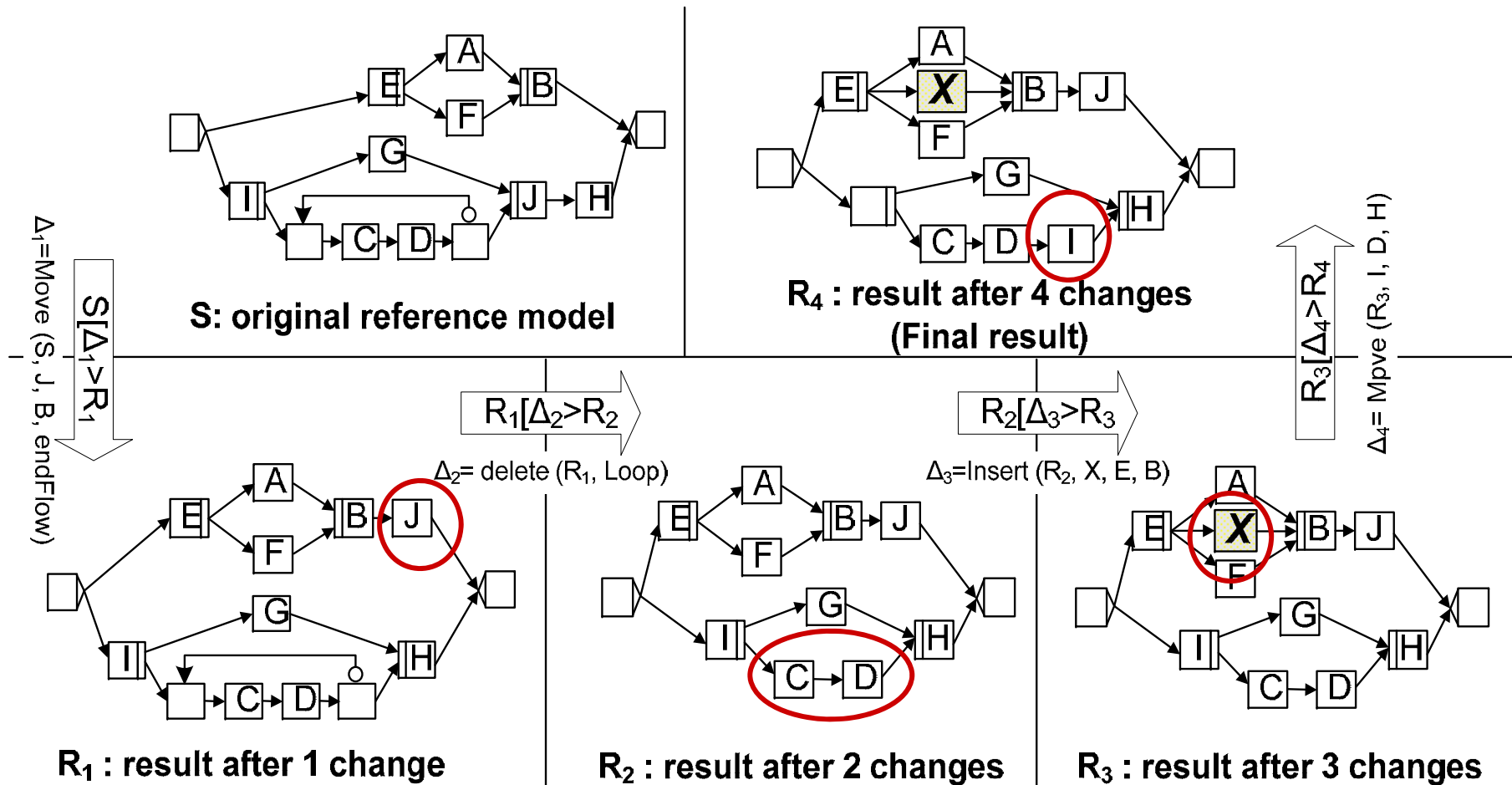


Li, C., Reichert, M., Wombacher, A. (2009) *Discovering Reference Models by Mining Process Variants Using a Heuristic Approach*. In: 7th Int'l Conf. Business Process Management (BPM'09), LNCS 5701, pp. 344-362

Li, C., Reichert, M. (2008) *Discovering Reference Process Models by Mining Process Variants*. Proc. 6th Int'l Conf. on Web Services, Beijing,



Process Variant Mining: Back to our Illustrating Example

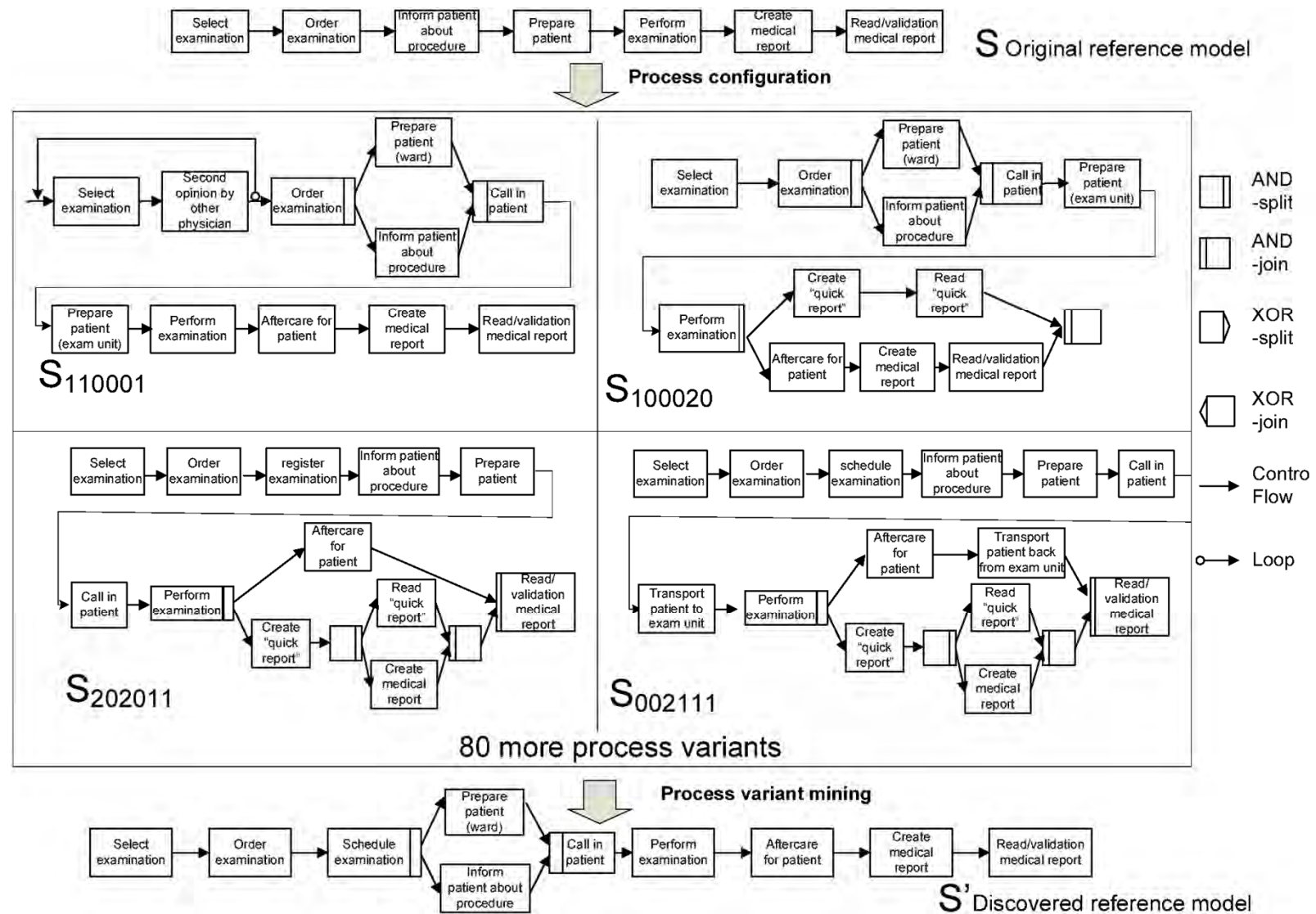


Process Variant Mining: Evaluation of Search Result

	S (reference model)	R ₁ (After 1 change)	R ₂ (After 2 changes)	R ₃ (After 3 changes)	R ₄ (After 4 changes)
Fitness	0.543	0.687	0.805	0.844	0.859
Average distance	4.85	3.95	3.25	2.65	2.4
Change operation		Move	Delete	Insert	Move
Delta fitness		0.143	0.118	0.039	0.009
Delta distance		0.9	0.7	0.6	0.25

Observation:

1. Discovered reference model is getting better with each search step.
2. Most relevant changes are performed at beginning.

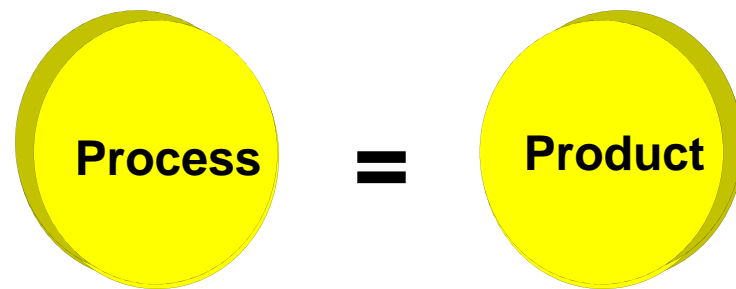


COREPRO

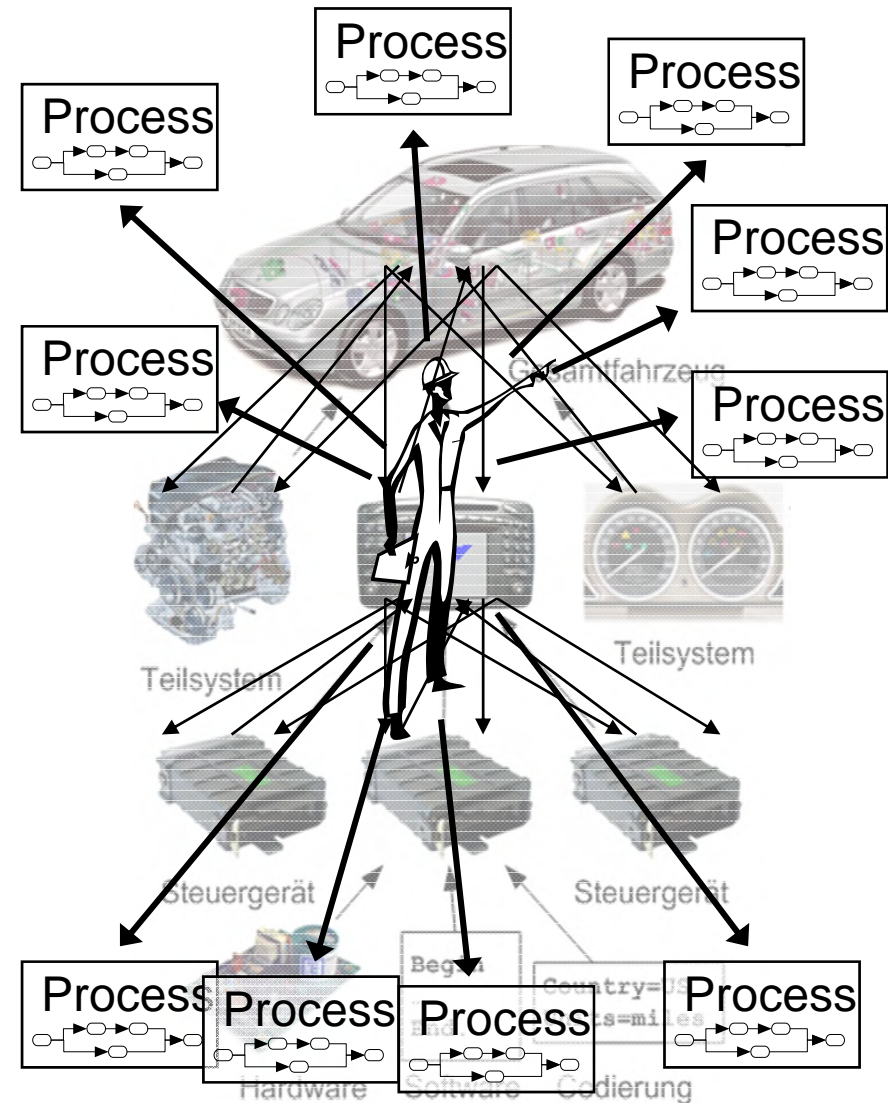


Enabling Data-driven Process Structures with
COREPRO

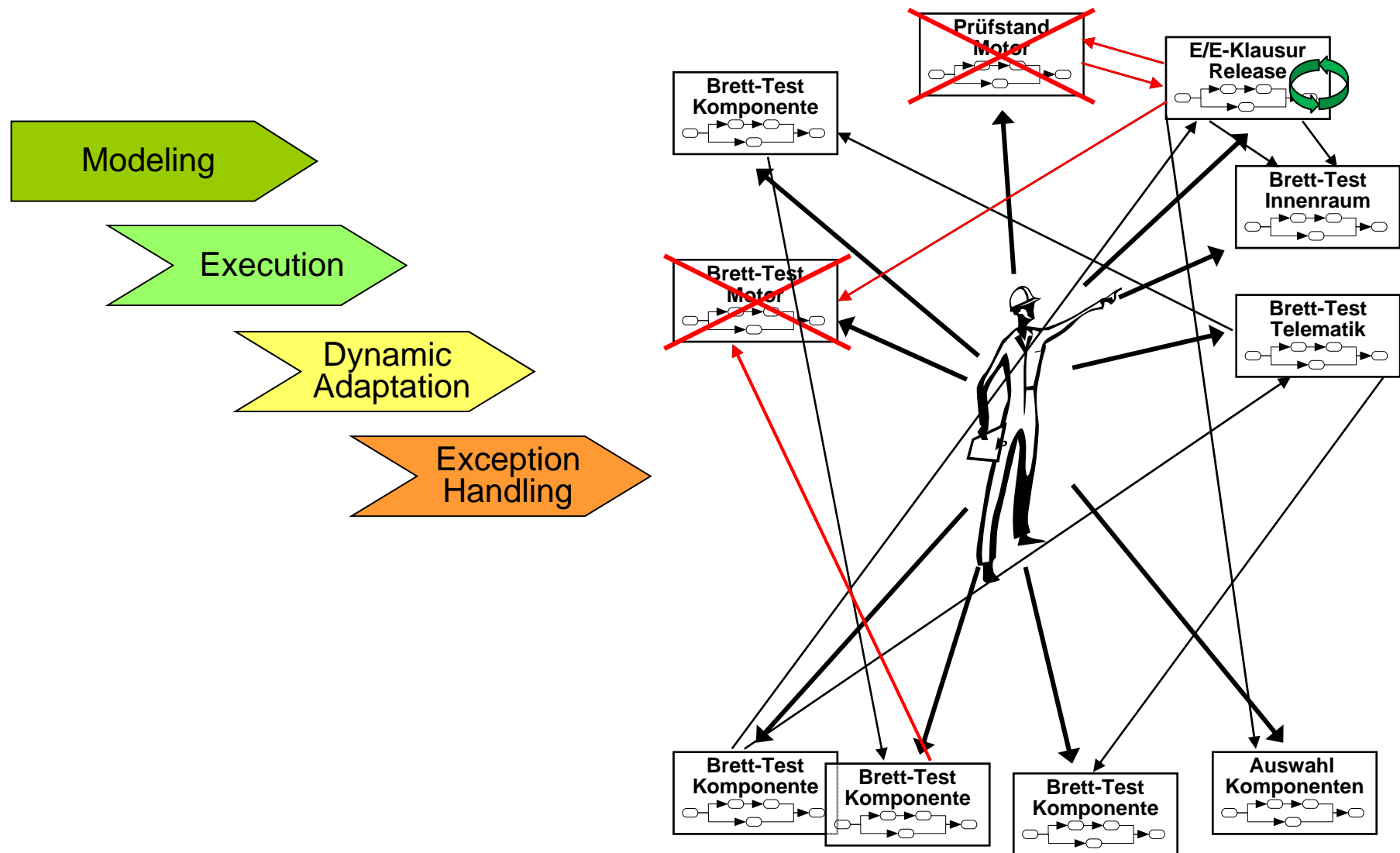
The COREPRO Approach: Motivation



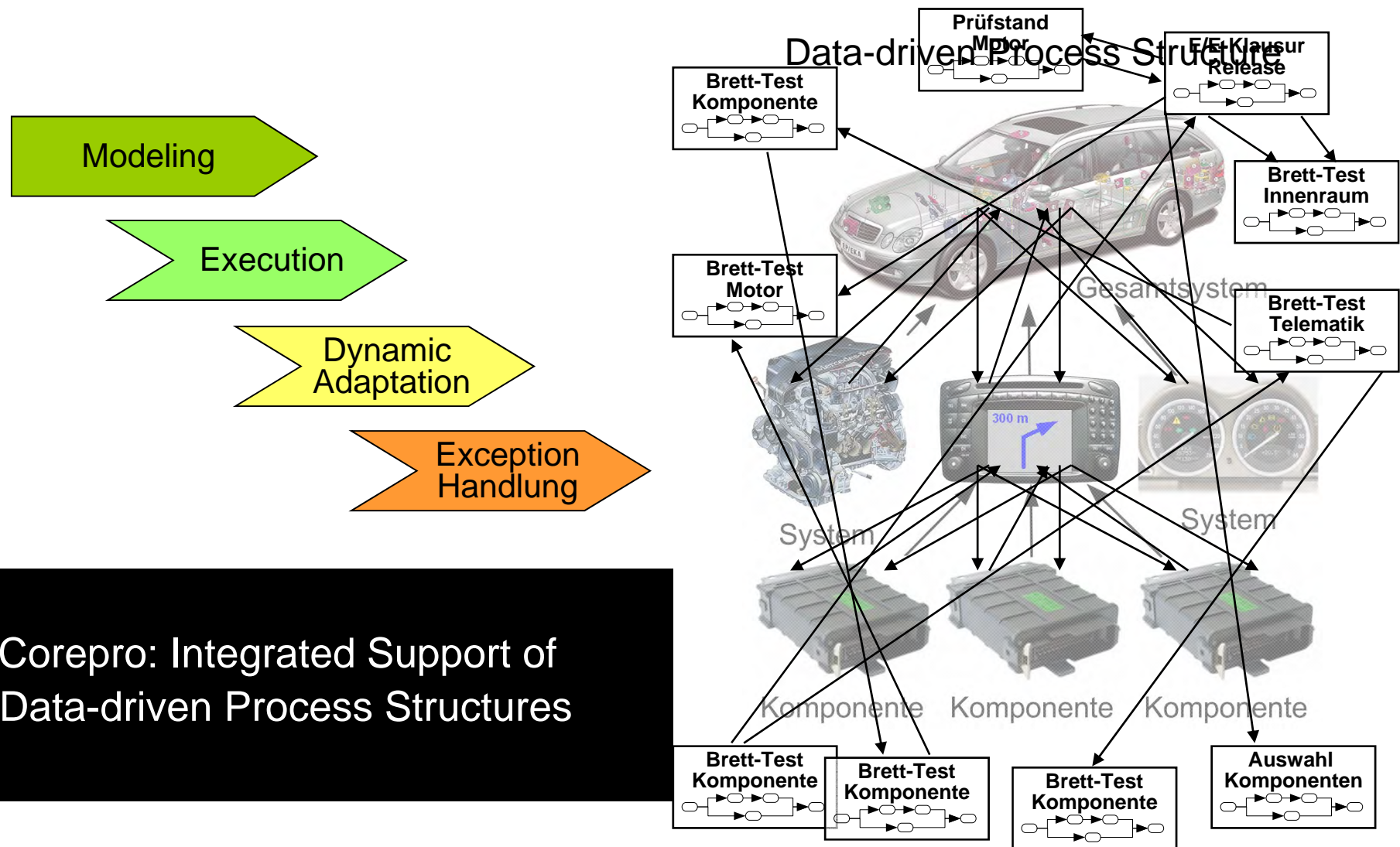
Process structure needs to be adapted when product structure changes!

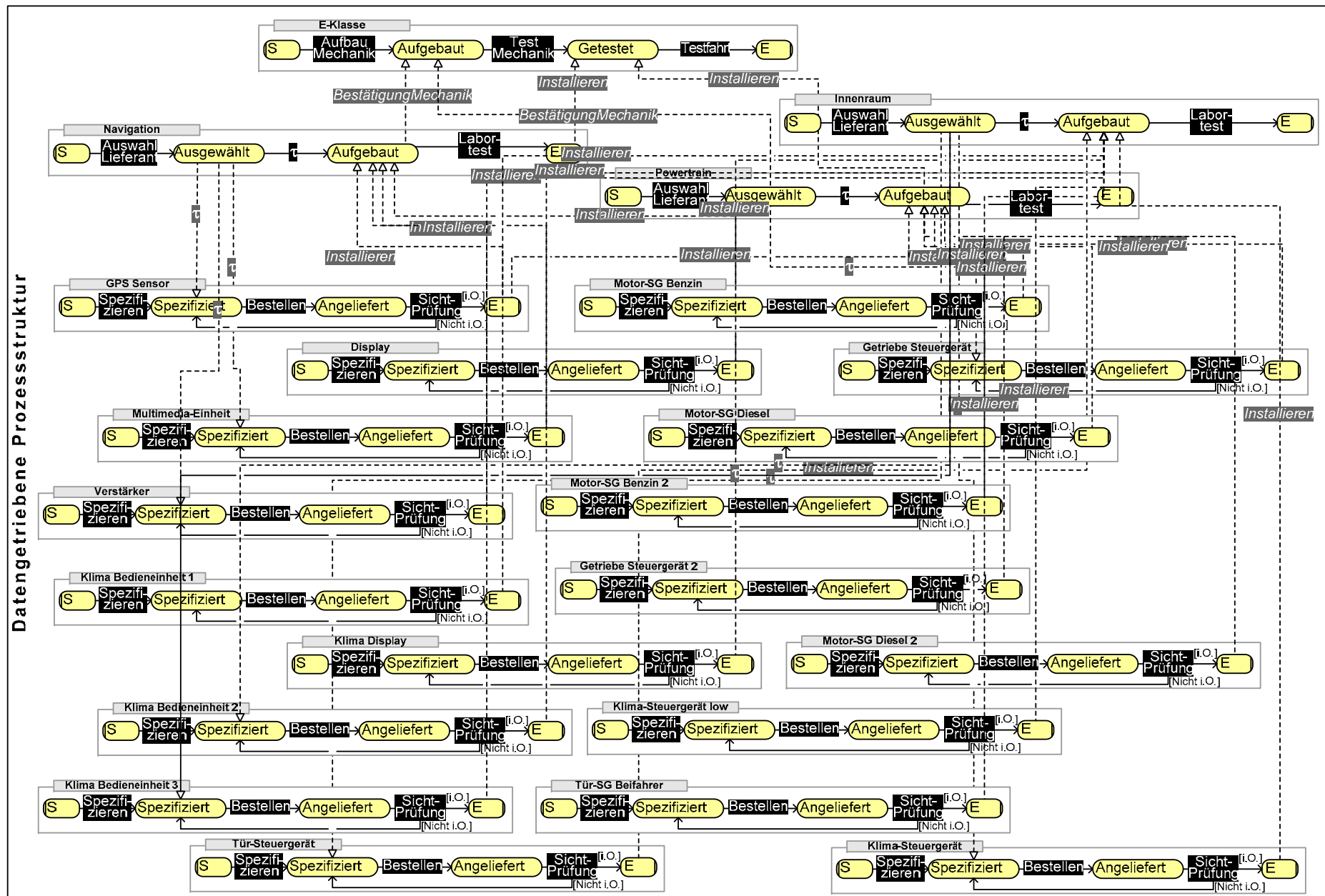


The COREPRO Approach: Motivation



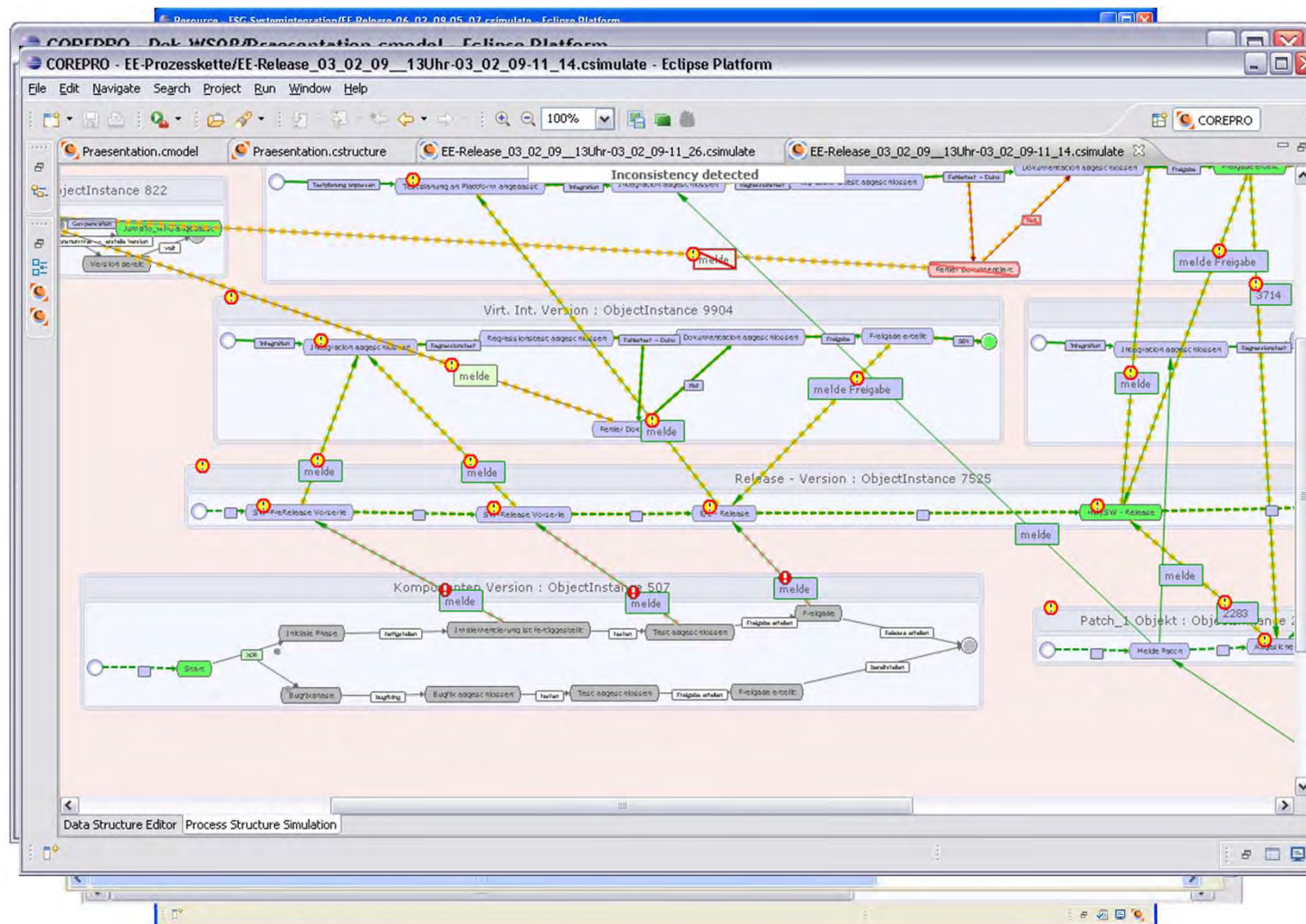
The COREPRO Approach: Motivation





The COREPRO Approach: Proof-of-Concept Implementation

Defining the Model and the Process Structure

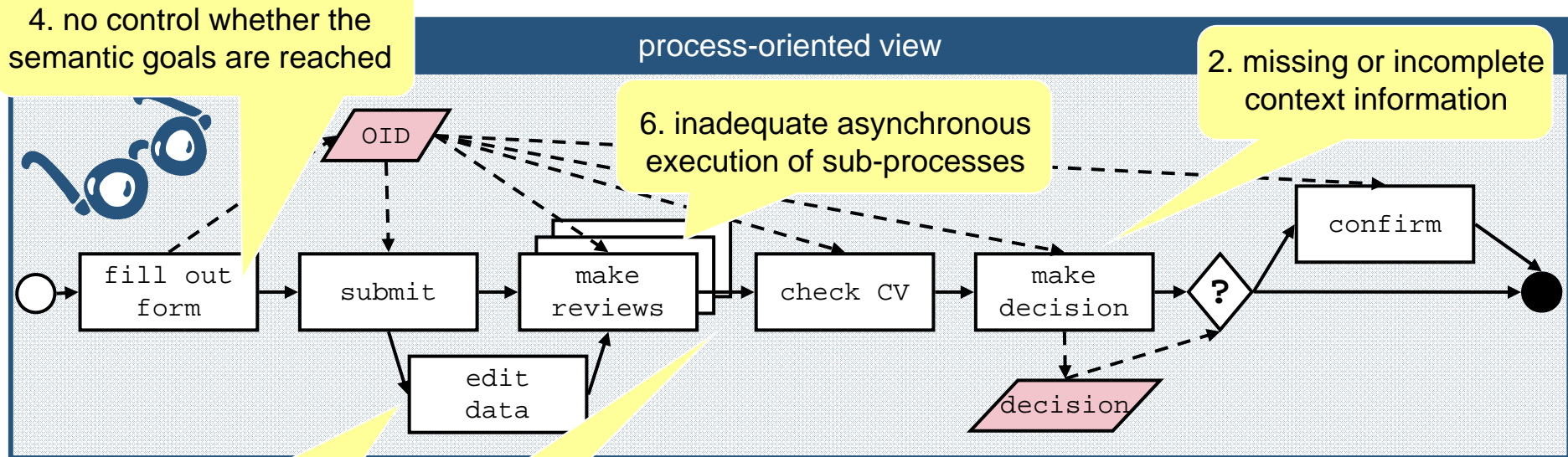




Philharmonic Flows

Object-aware Processes

Data Handling in Existing WfMS



3. no optional activities

1. access on data only during the execution of activities

5. each process instance is executed in isolation



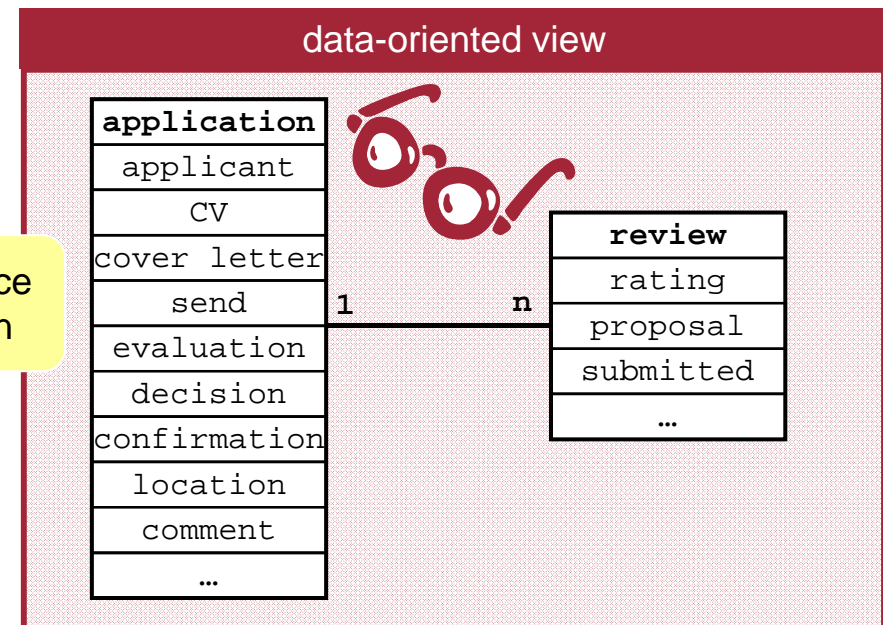
generic functions



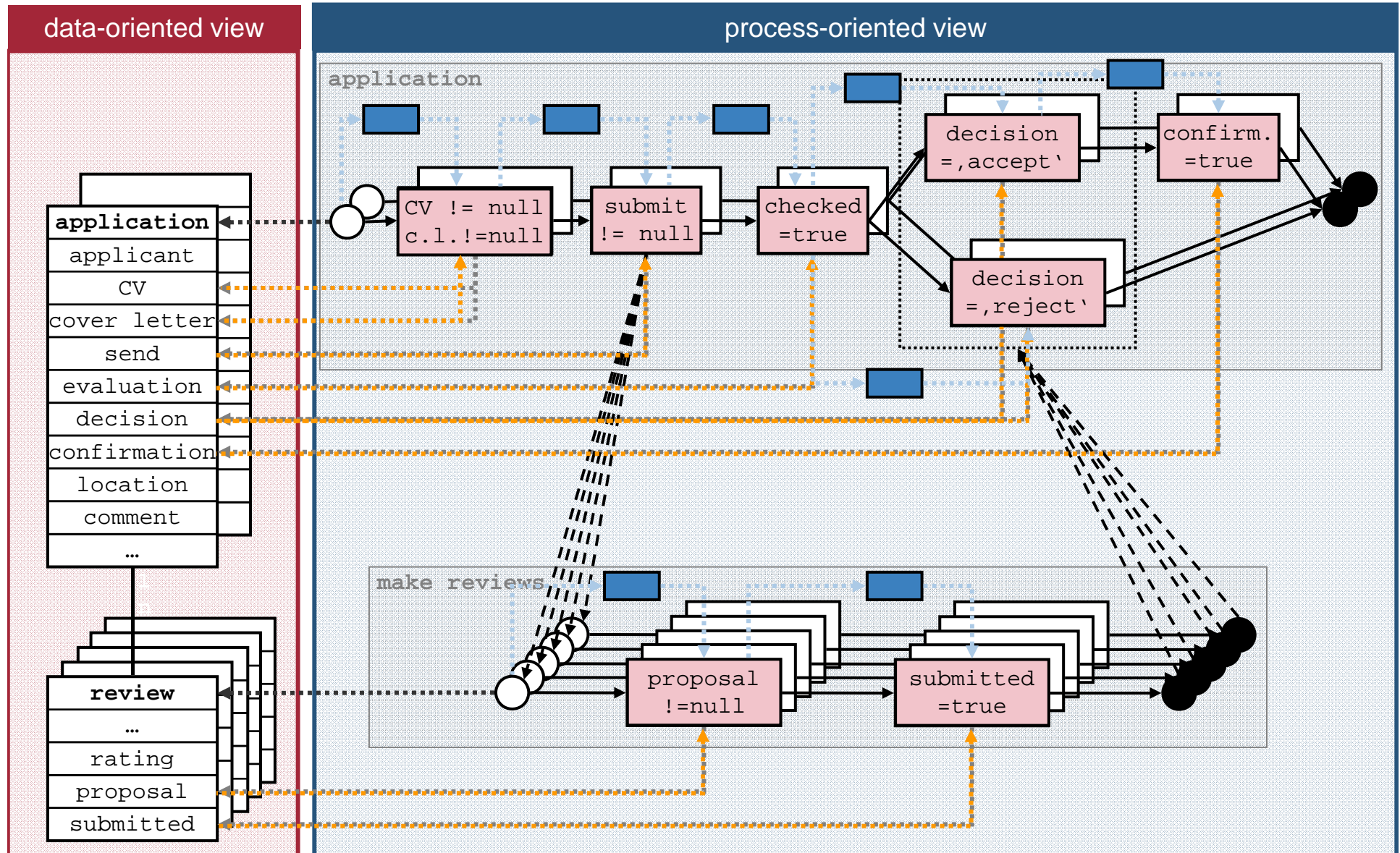
comprehensive lifecycle support



missing data-oriented view



Philharmonic Flows: Object-aware Process Management



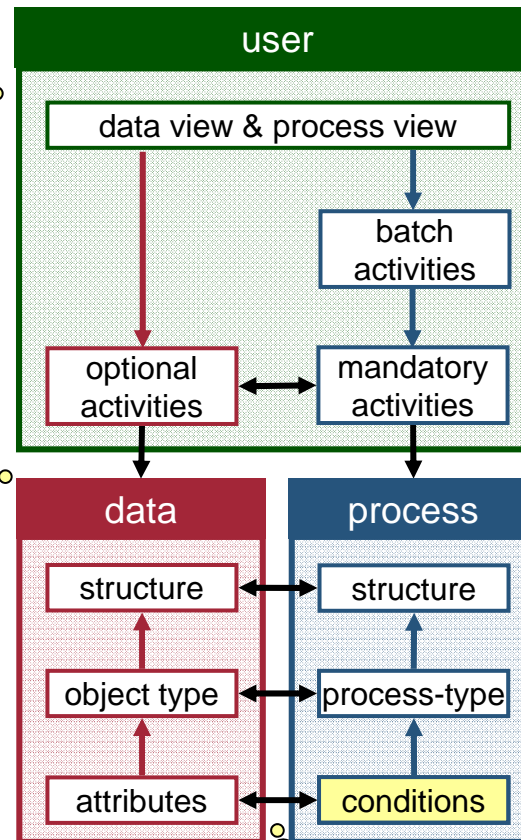
Philharmonic Flows: Object-aware Process Management

71

Challenge 1:
Integrated View

Challenge 5:
Flexibility

Challenge 3:
Synchronization



Challenge 2:
Clear Granularity!

Challenge 4:
Data-centered Paradigm



Summary & Outlook

Summary & Outlook

business conditions vary with innovation pressure



business objectives vary with business conditions



business processes vary with business objectives



**changing business processes will be a
common business process in the future**

Summary & Outlook

Flexibility Support in most existing PAIS is like Teenager Sex!!



It's on everyone's mind all the time.
Everyone's talking about it all the time
Everyone's thinks everyone is doing it.
Almost no one is really doing it.

The few who are doing it:

Do it poorly

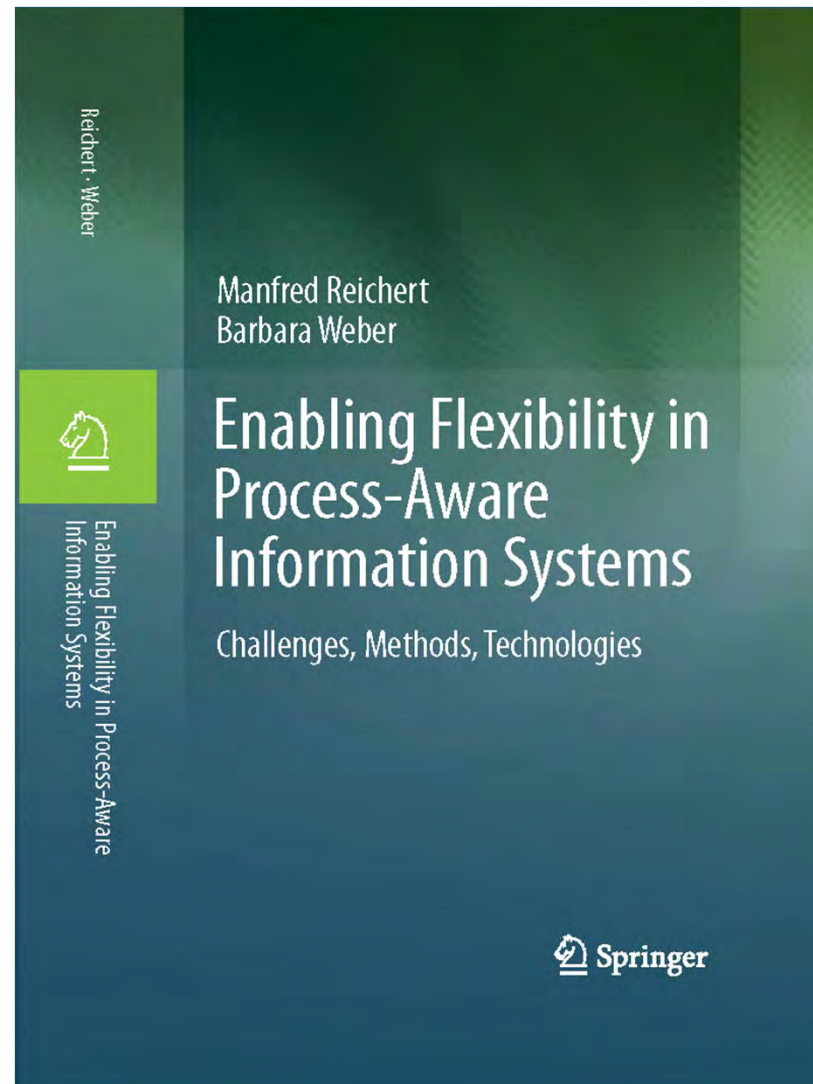
Think "sure it will be better the next time".

Are not practicing it safely

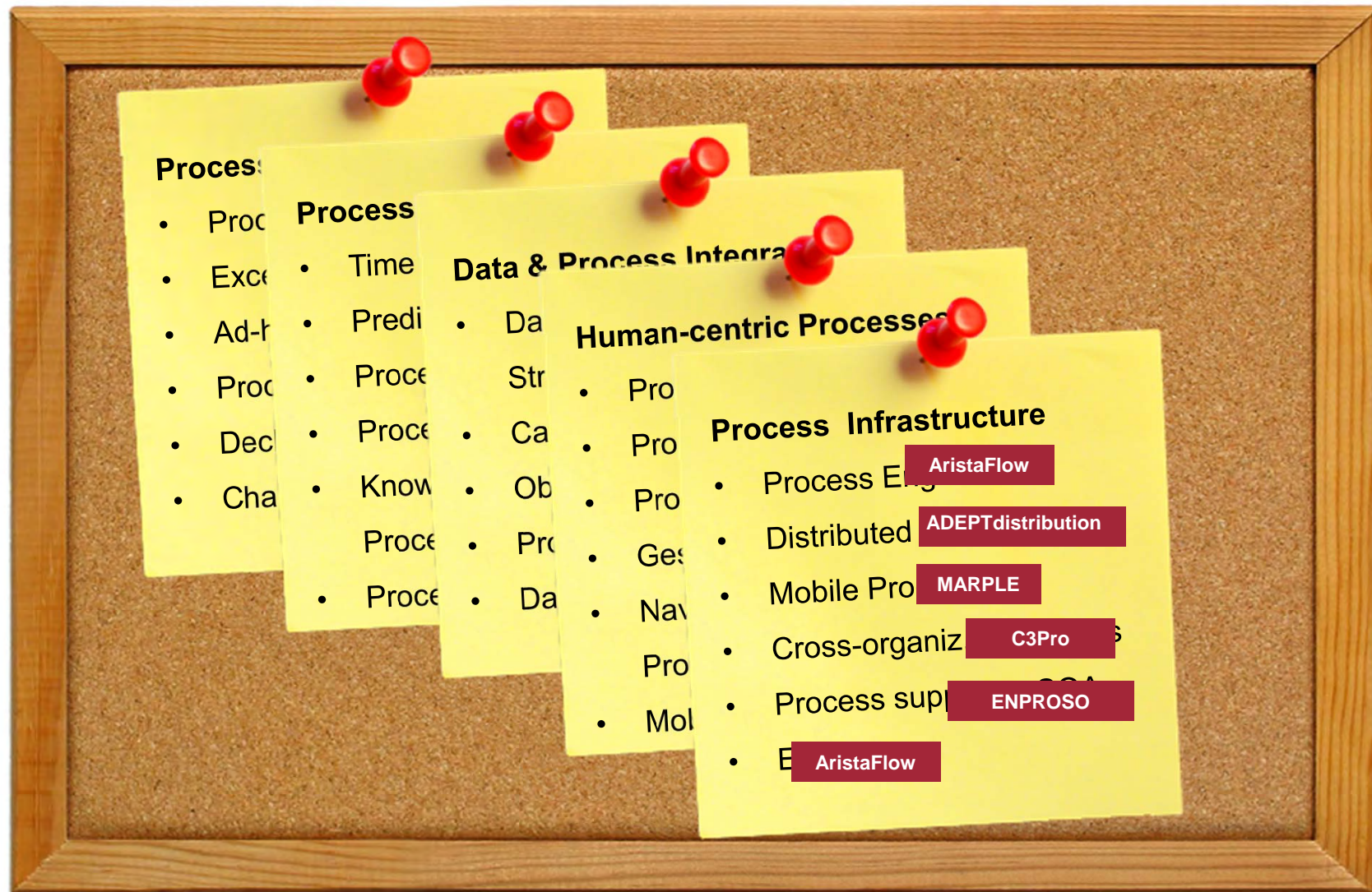
Everyone is bragging about their successes all the time, although very few have actually had any success

Anonymous

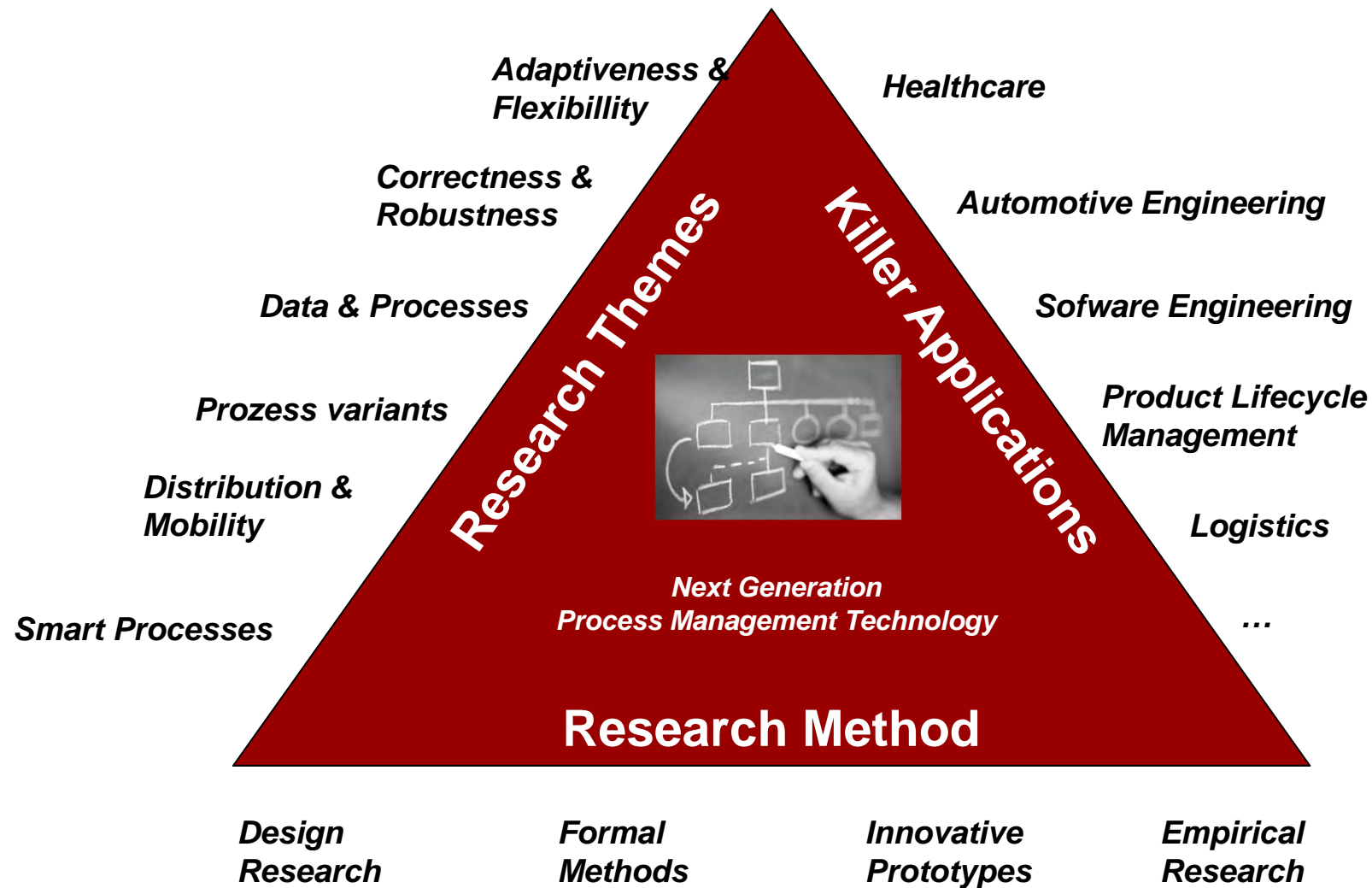




Summary & Outlook: Projects



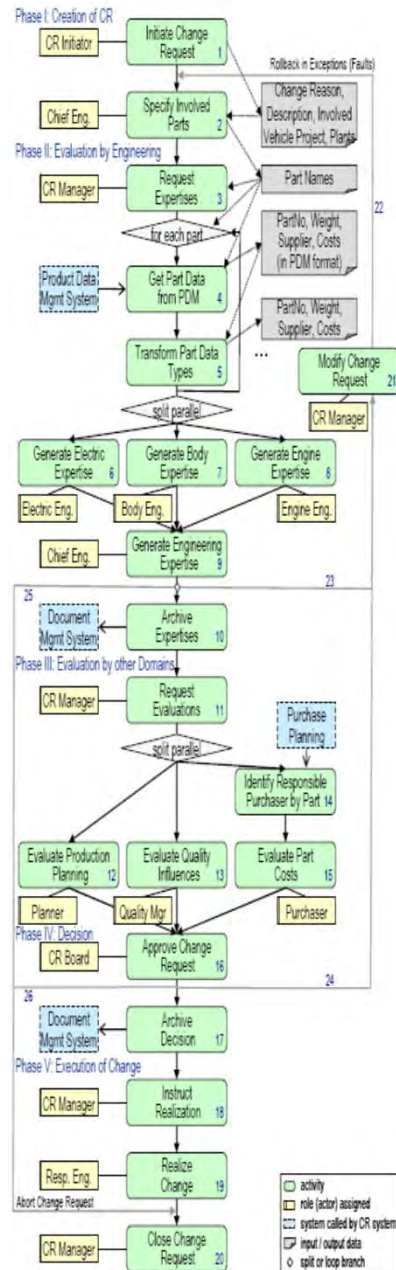
Summary



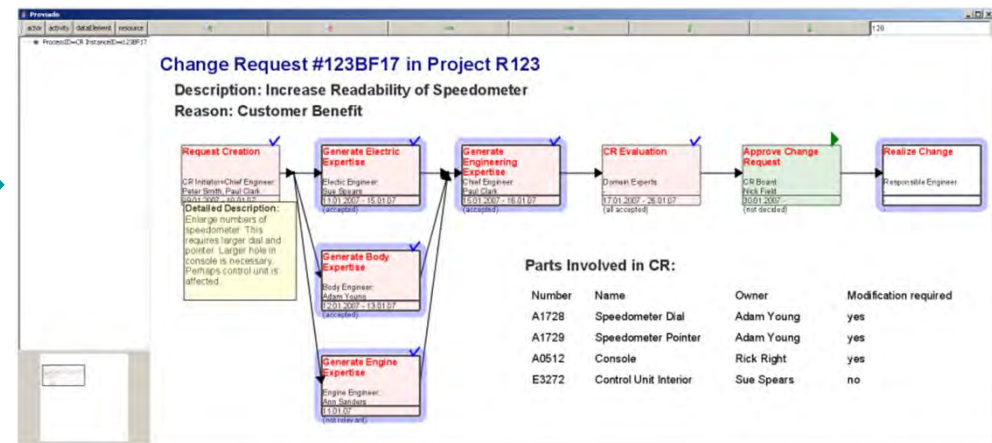
My team



Process Visualization & Abstraction

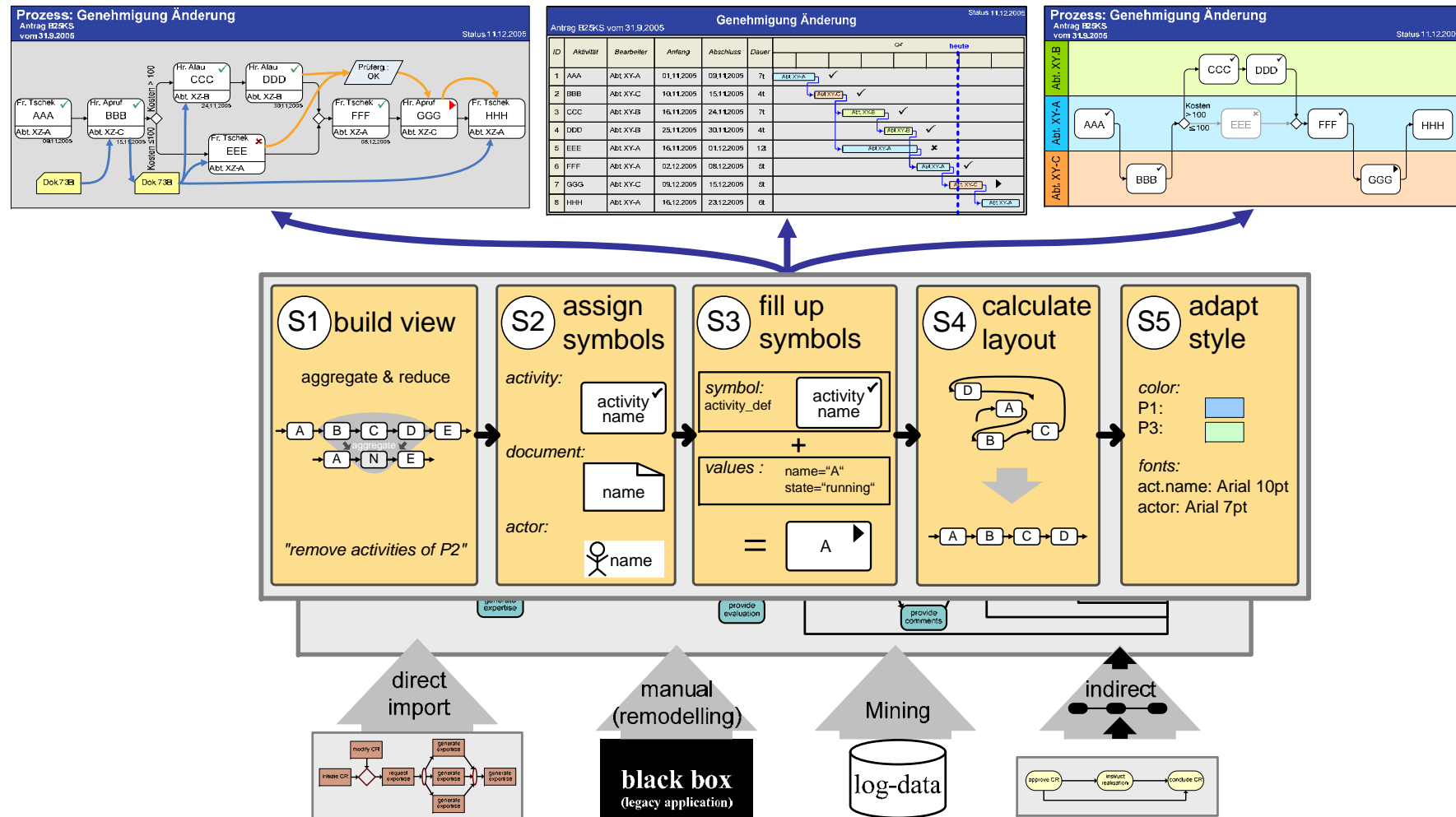


Personalized Visualization

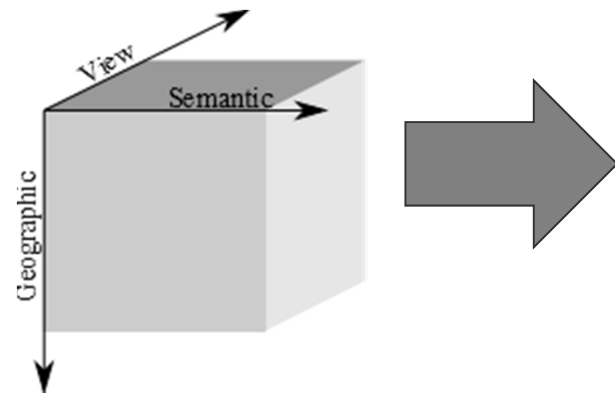


Process Visualization

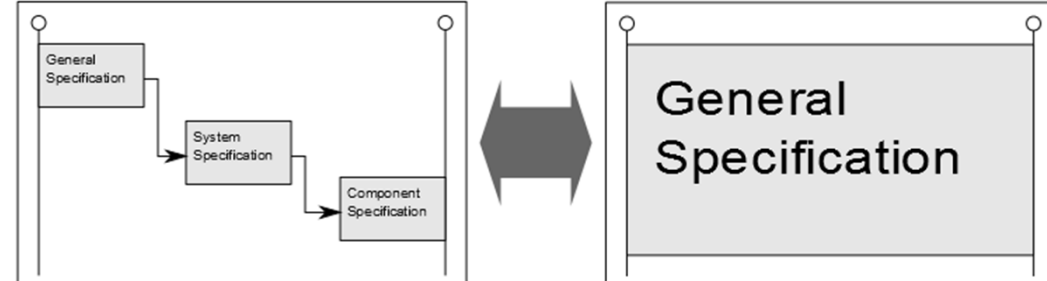
Summary: What we achieved in Proviado?



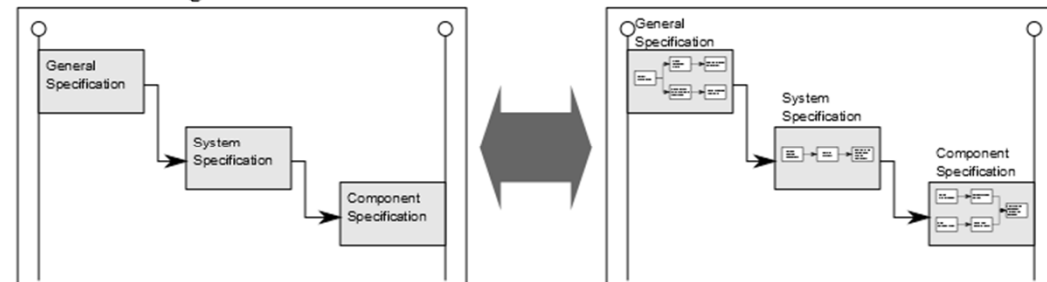
Navigating in Complex Business Processes



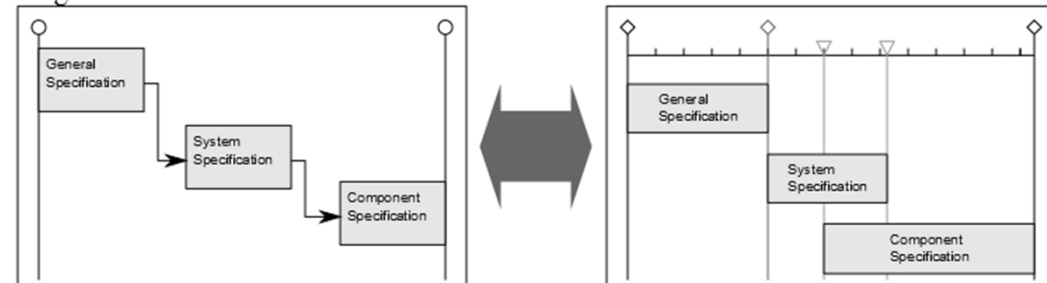
(a) geographic navigation dimension



(b) semantic navigation dimension



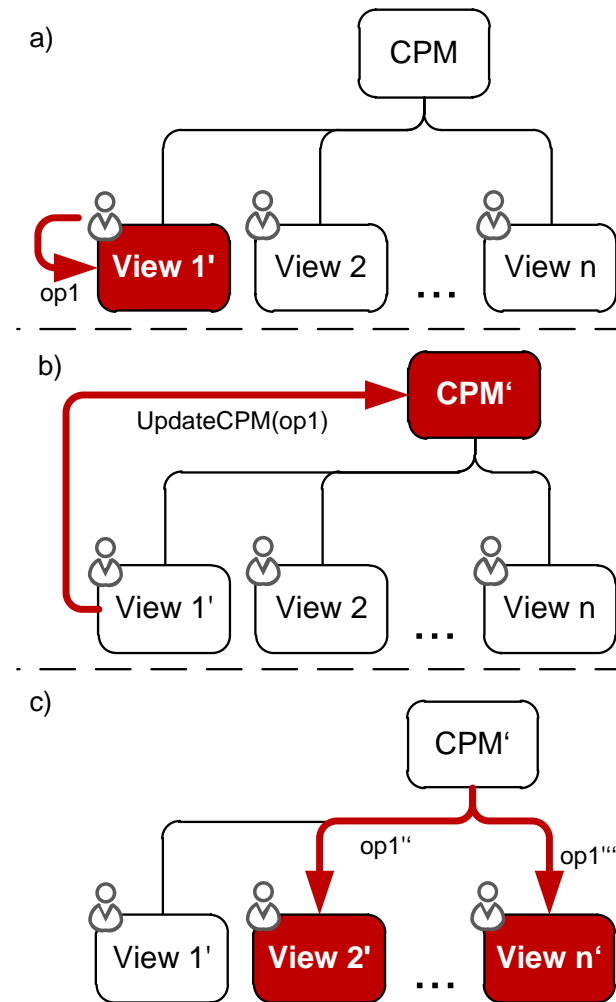
(c) view navigation dimension
"logic-based"



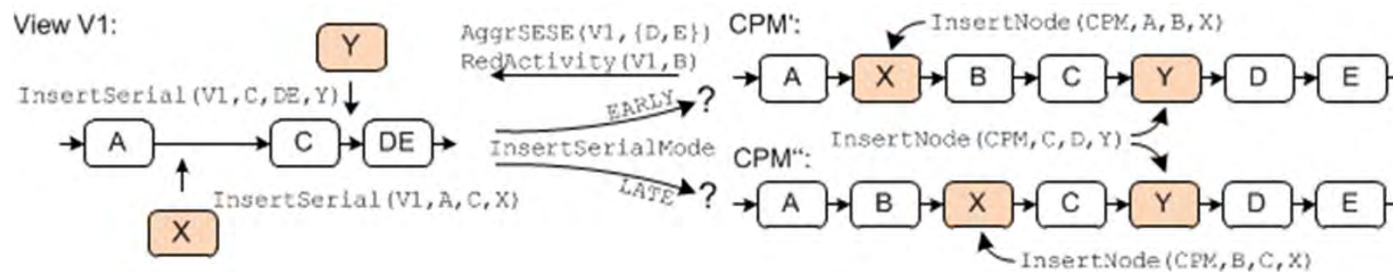
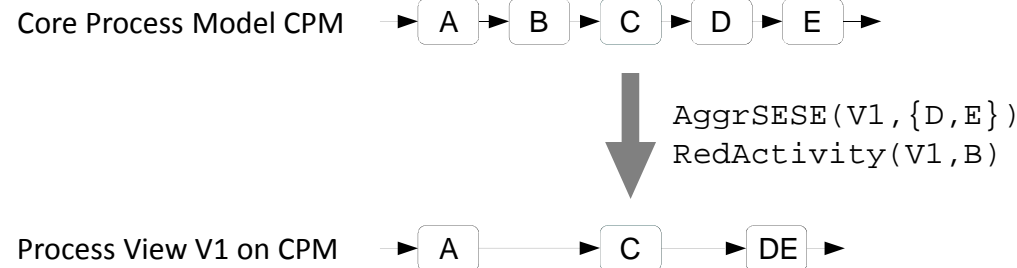
Updatable Process Model Abstractions (Process Views)



- **Basic Idea:** Using process views not only for visualization purpose, but also as interface for changing the underlying core process model (CPM)
- Updates of a process view then have to be correctly propagated to its CPM as well as all other views on this CPM
- Necessitates a formal foundation



Updatable Process Model Abstractions (Process Views)



*Ambiguities when propagating
view changes to the CPM*



Updatable Process Model Abstractions (Process Views)

proView

*Updating a CPM and related views
after a view update!*

