Empirical Studies into Modelling in Software Development in the Age of Big Data and AI

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Outline of talk

Introduction

- Modeling in Software Development
  - Motivation
- Description of Practice of Modeling

Empirical Research in Software Design and Modeling

- Topics include:
  - illustrations of various of modeling-related 'big' data
  - illustrations of machine learning in this field

Summary & Conclusions

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Joint Dept of Computer Science Chalmers and Gotenborg Univ`s: Divisions

Computing Science

Formal Methods

Functional Programming

Computer Engineering

Information Security

Interaction Design

Software Engineering

Networks and systems

4

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Eric Knauss


Philip Leitner


Regina Hebig


Birgit Penzenstadler

Software Metrics

Model-driven Software Engineering

Software Architecture

Variability and Software Product Lines

Management of Software Projects

Software Testing/QA

Industrial Collaboration

Empirical Software Engineering

Self-Adaptive Systems

Software Security

Requirements Engineering

Open Source Systems

ERICSSON VOLVO Spotify

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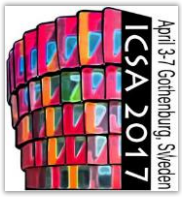
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING CONFERENCES IN GOTHENBURG

Open Source 2016
REFSQ 2016
ICSA 2017 http://icsa-conferencesorg/2017/
Mensura 2017 http://www.iwsm-mensura.org/2017
IFIPTM 2017 Int. Conf. on Trust Management
http://wp.portal.chalmers.se/ifiptm2017/



+ yearly Lindholmen Software Development day (600+)

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Software Engineering in Africa (SEiA)

- Software Engineering in Africa workshop at ICSE
- SIDA BRIGHT project (2015-2010)
  - Supervise 10 lecturers in Uganda towards their PhD degree.
  - Yearly summerschools in East-Africa

- Tentative plans:
  African Summerschool on Software Engineering 2020

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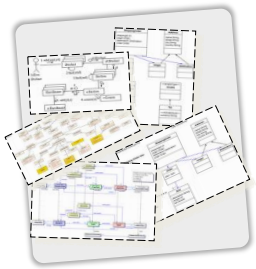
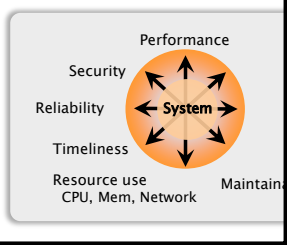
Introduction: Research Interests

- **What are the pay-offs of investing in architecture/design/modeling?**
  Fewer defects?
  Cheaper maintenance? …
- **Extract design knowledge from software repositories** (models, text, …)
- **Analysis and Reasoning about Quality Properties of System Architectures**
  - Automating Architecture Design Optimization by Genetic Algorithms
  - Maintainability, Technical Debt





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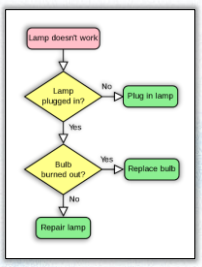
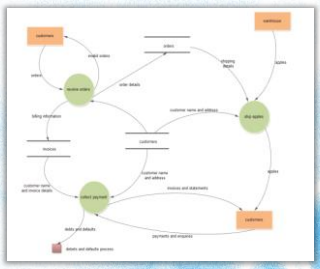
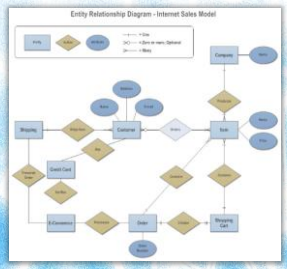
Modeling in Software Engineering

Long history of modeling in software engineering:



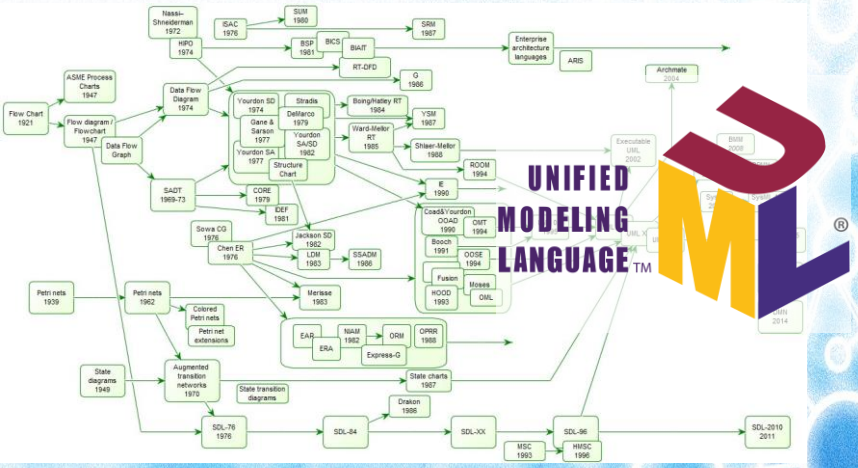




Flow Chart (dd 1921!) Data Flow Diagrams (dd 1970) Entity-Relation Diagram (1976)

Models of software capture structure and behaviour

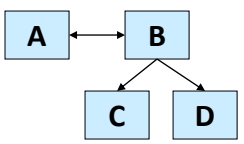
Modelling History



Juha-Pekka Tolvanen, CEO Meta-Case, Keynote at Code Generation 2014:
The business cases of modeling and generators

Example 4+1 Views model

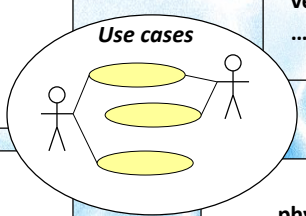
Structure view:
class/component-diagram



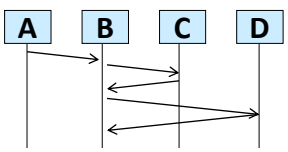
Development view

file ownership
Config. Mngnt view
versioning policies
…

Use cases

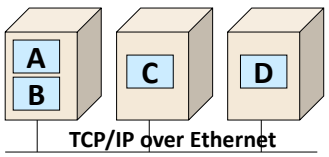


Behaviour view:
Sequence diagram



BC/WC e2e-response times, freq.

Deployment view:
physical model + mapping



bandwidth, availability

Fake UML News – Urban Myths

UML is a notation, not a method –

UML can only be used with object orientation

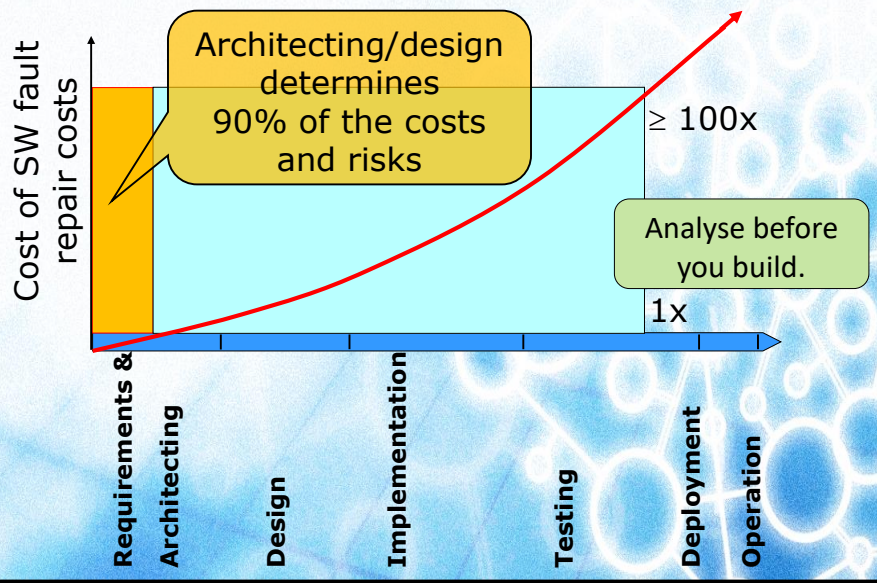
UML is not a process

i.e. UML is not tied to waterfall or RUP or SCRUM or …

Only when used for code generation, is modeling effective

Michel Chaudron is a UML advocate

The Importance of Architecture



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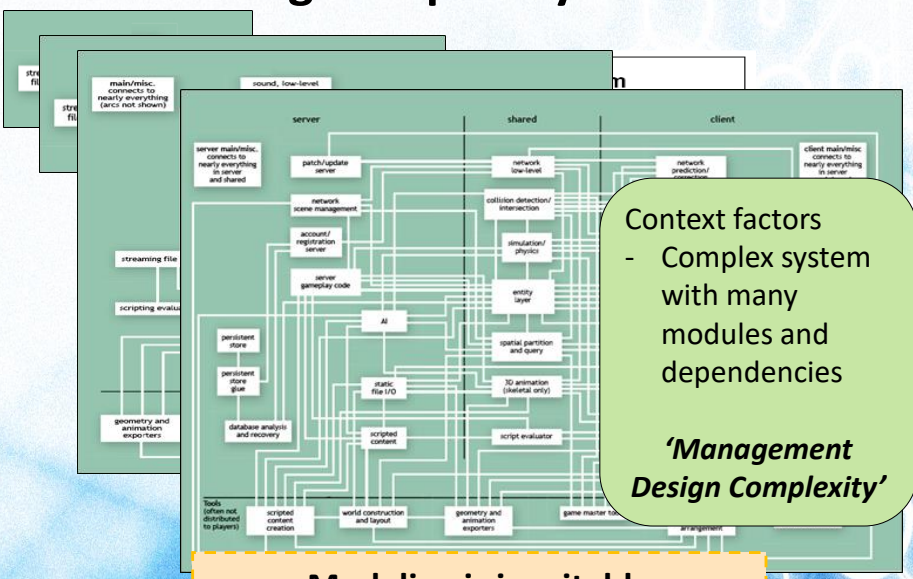
Increasing Complexity of Software



Blow, J. "Game Development: Harder Than You Think." *ACM Queue*

Context factors
- Complex system with many modules and dependencies

'Management Design Complexity'

Modeling is inevitable

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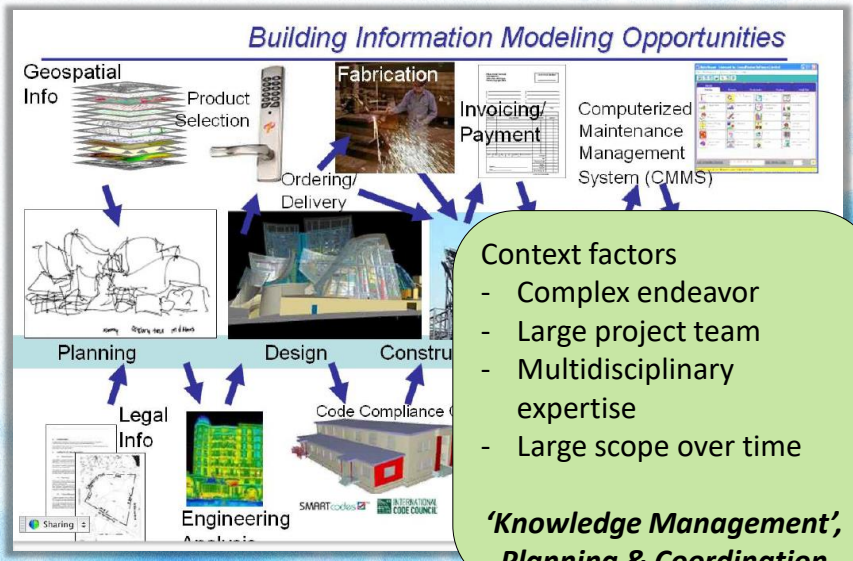
Motivation

Why should we care about modeling software design?

Pro-Modeling-camp:
"I can not imagine we could develop our systems without any modeling."

Anti-Modeling-camp:
"Models are useless. Code is the only truth."

Modeling & Design in Civil Engineering

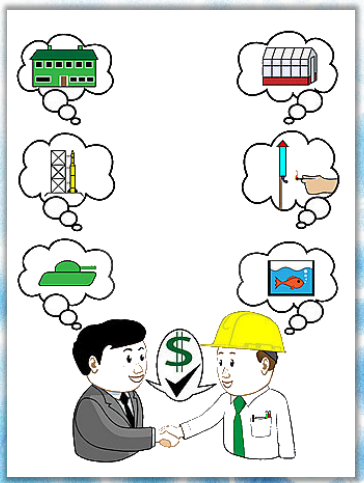


Context factors
- Complex endeavor
- Large project team
- Multidisciplinary expertise
- Large scope over time

'Knowledge Management', Planning & Coordination

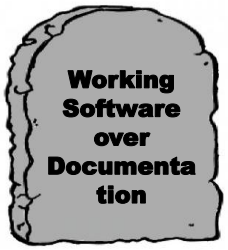
Summary of Arguments in favour of Modelling in Software Development

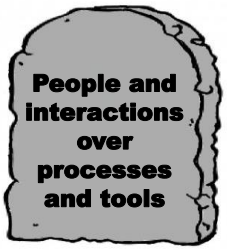
+ Communicating / Coordination
+ Analysing / Predicting
+ Understanding / Structuring
+ Guiding Construction
+ Blueprint for Production



Arguments against modeling

Big Design Up Front (BDUF)





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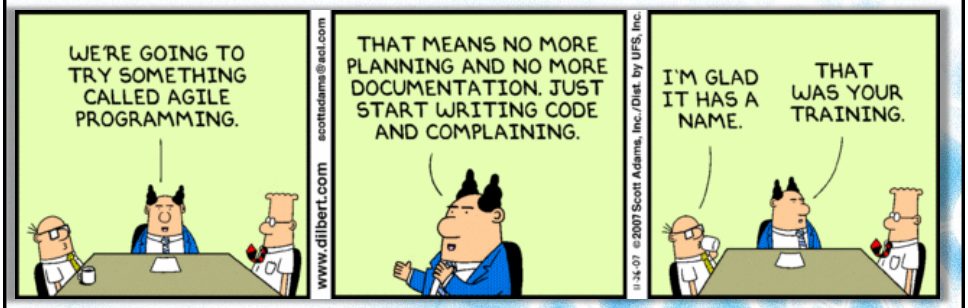
Some arguments against modeling

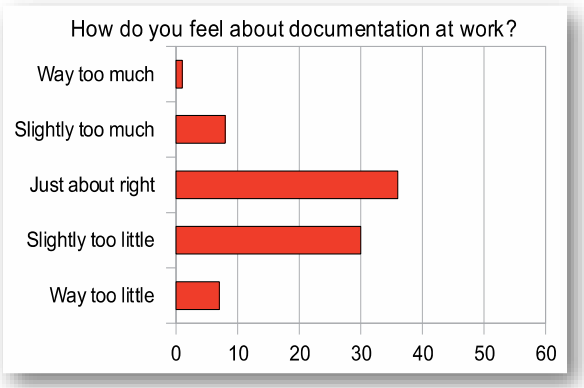
- Creating models takes too much time
  - we can do the same without models
- Maintaining models takes too much time
- Notation is too complex
- Notation is not expressive enough
- Our customer does not ask for it

Not always rational …



Modeling & Documentation in Agile Development

- Agile principles:
  working software over comprehensive documentation



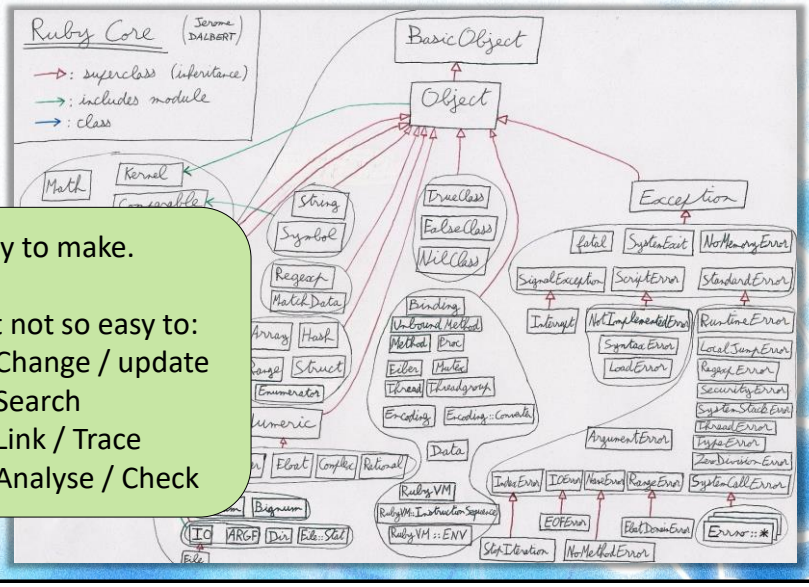
Survey under 75+ agile developers

Tending towards: we need a bit more

Modeling is compatible with agile development

Christoph J. Stettina and Werner Heijstek, Necessary and Neglected? An Empirical Study of Internal Documentation in Agile Software Development Teams 29th ACM Int. Conf. on Design of Communication , Pisa, Italy

Informal (whiteboard) drawing



Easy to make.

But not so easy to:
- Change / update
- Search
- Link / Trace
- Analyse / Check

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To Model or Not to Model?

Better Questions

- Which people in my development organization benefit from design models? Through which task/activity?
- Which information should I include in my models?
  - Who 'owns' this information?
- How can we integrate modeling into our
  - development process?
    - who should be responsible for creating and maintaining models?
  - development toolchain?

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Understanding the practice of modeling in software projects

The Model-based SE Spectrum

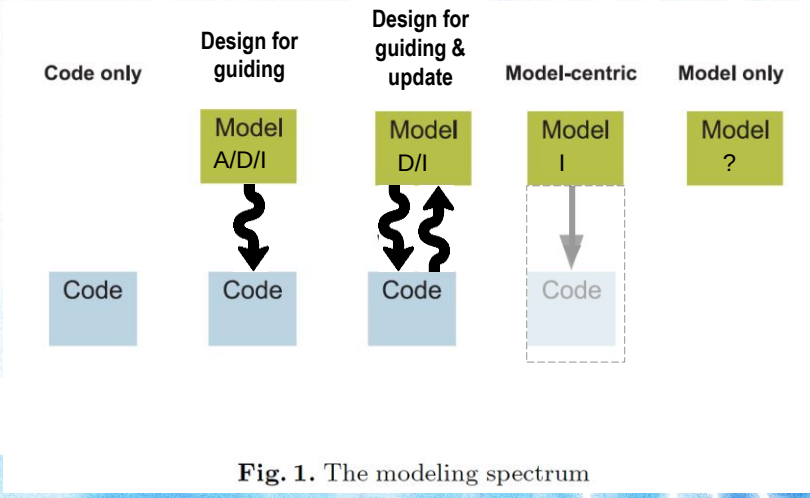

Fig. 1. The modeling spectrum

Model driven architecture: Principles and practice, Brown, A.W., Software and Systems Modeling, 2004

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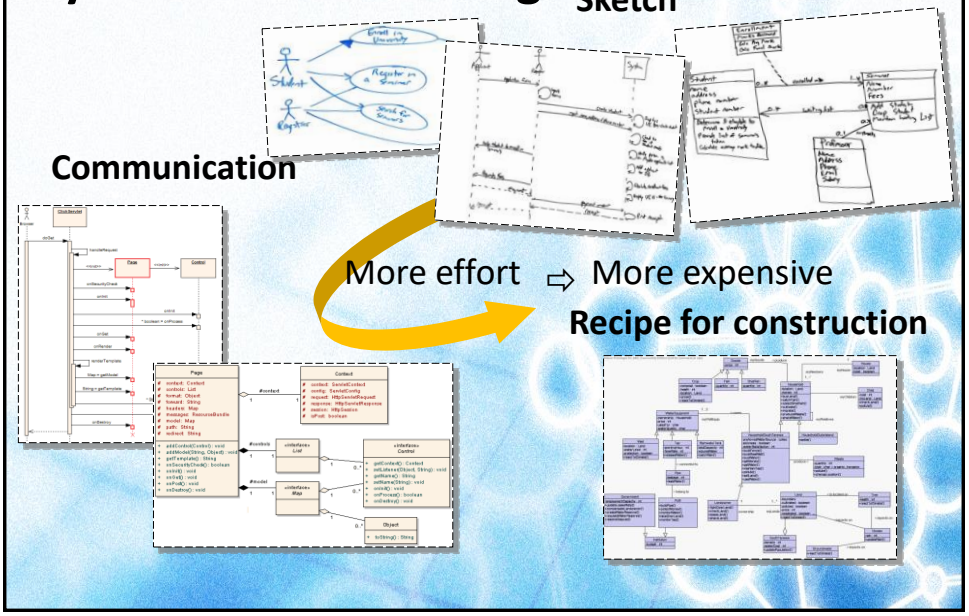
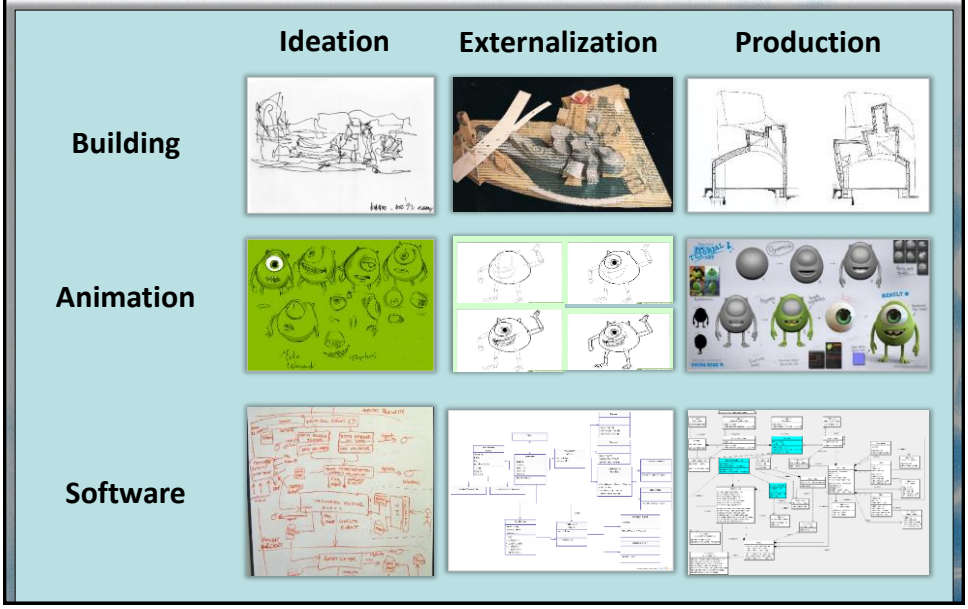
Styles of UML modeling





Evolution of Models during a project

	Ideation	Externalization	Production
Architecture			
Design			
Implementation			

Different stages have different needs on formality
Yet tasks are connected:
'smooth' handover over design representation is needed

Target audience of the models?

	Ideation	Externalization	Production
Main audience:	**people**		**computers**
			
	Ok with informal spec (has context, domain & background knowledge)		Needs formal and complete spec

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Empirical Research in Modeling in Software Design

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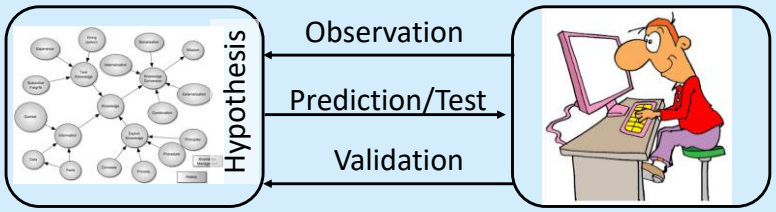
Empirical Research

… is a way of gaining knowledge by means of *observation* or *experience*.

Theory
SE body of knowledge

Practice
People/Skills, Processes, Methods, Technology, Artefacts



Topics: CMM, OO, Agile, MDA, …

Methods: Experiment, Case study, Survey, **Project Repositories** …

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How to study this ?

- Communicating / Understanding / Coordination
- Analysing / Predicting
- Structuring
- Guiding
- Production

→ Understandability of designs?

→ Misunderstandings??

individual

→ Software Quality
- Modularity
- Defects

product

→ Productivity / Efficiency

project

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The challenges with Industrial ('Real') Data

1. Difficult to get access to
2. Difficult to publish / share (replicate)

DIY - Let's Build Our Own Dataset

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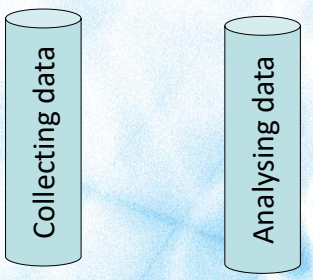
2 main pillars for Big Data



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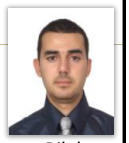
Collecting Big Data


Bilal Karasneh

Idea: This is a 'Search'-problem.

Probably Google can do this for us.

Attempt 0.1 & 0.2:

1. Search for (filetype) .xmi using Google

   Unsuccessful: incredibly much that is not about 'XMI' for UML

   Manual filtering is very time-consuming
2. Search for 'class diagram' via Google Image Search

   \+ : many images can be found, not all are class diagrams

   \- : very high variation in quality
   tutorial/lecture-slides (on notation), student-projects, …

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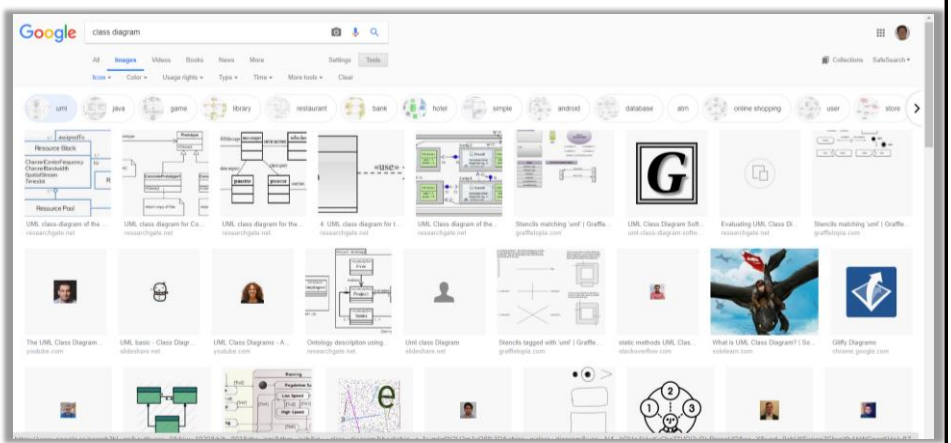
Google Image Results – page 1



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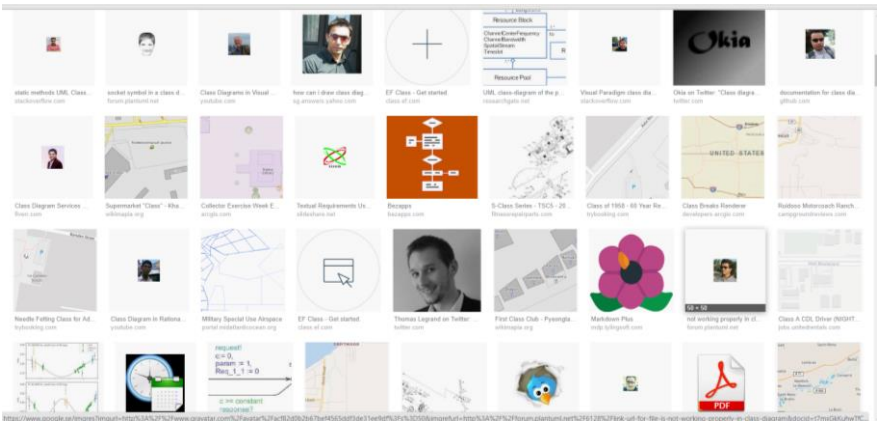
Google Image Results – **page 2**



Many many false positives.

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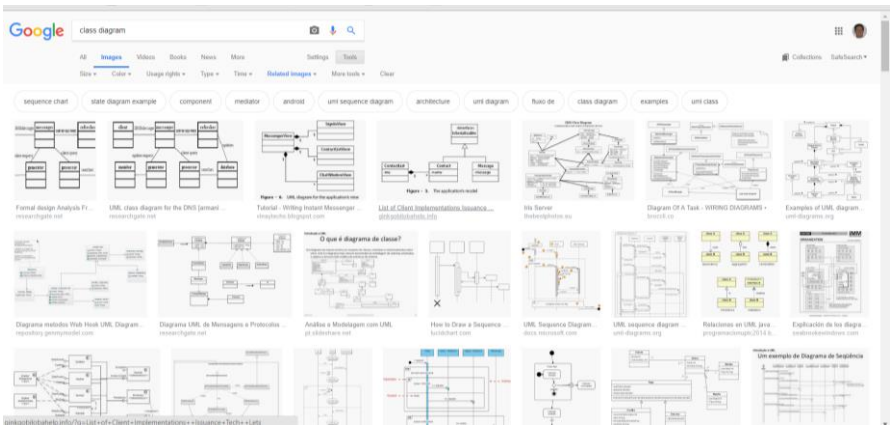
Google Image Results – **page 3**



Still many false positives.

After much manual filtering: collection of about 1000 diagrams.

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Classifier for recognizing UML Class diagrams

With my students:
- Ingimar Samúelsson
- Jóel Hjaltason

- Input:
  arbitrary image (.jpeg)
- Output:
  Yes/No (=UML Class Diagram)
- Initial filtering done by rules
  - Size (no icons), colours
- 1300 Diagrams, of which 650 UML CD and 650 other (incl. Seq.D, ER, charts, …)

Features include:
Contours & Shapes
Horizontal and Vertical Lines
Rectangle-H-W-ratio
Connected rectangles
Rectangles with 'divider-line'
NON-Hor/Ver lines
% of area used

Algorithm	Precision
Random Forrest	0.95

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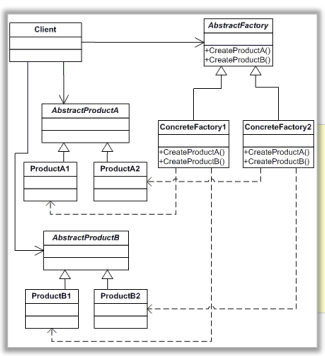
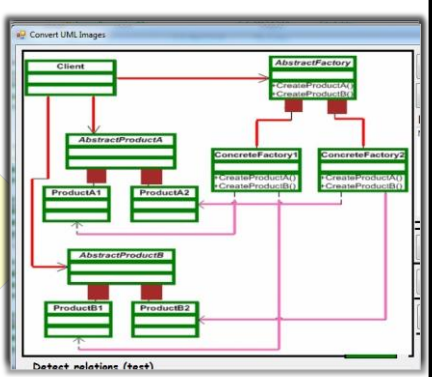
Automated Extraction of Models from Images

Bilal Karasneh



Recognizing:
- Rectangles
- Lines
- Text,
- arrow-heads



Input: .jpeg, .png

Output: XMI for the class model

Milestone: IMG2UML Tool

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Is Reverse Engineering a solution?

- Automatically generated from source code, hence always up-to-date!
- But, …

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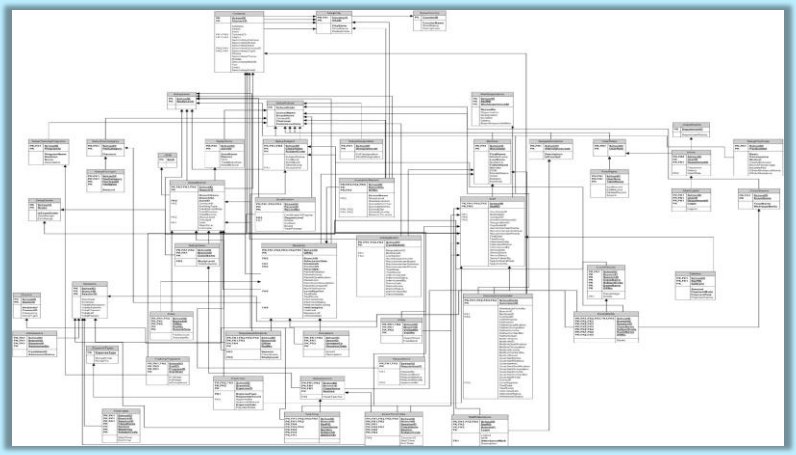
Reverse Engineering of a small system



Clearly different from forward designed UML designs (o.a. in size, layout, detail, naming, ….)

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Classifier for UML Class Diagram Styles using Machine Learning

- Forward vs Reverse Engineered Diagram Classifier
- 16 Features
  - mostly related to 'parameters' of methods in diagram
- Sample of 999 class diagrams
  - Reverse : 806
  - Forward : 193

Algorithm	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F-measure
Random Forrest	90.74	0.95	0.93	0.94

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Collecting data

The Quest for UML in Open Source Projects

-- Mining GitHub --





Regina Hebig [*]
Truong Ho-Quang [*]
Miguel-Angel Fernandez [+]
Gregorio Robles [+]
Michel R.V. Chaudron [*]

[*] Gothenburg and Chalmers University
[+] Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Hebig, Regina, et al. "The quest for open source projects that use UML: mining GitHub." *Proceedings of MODELS* 2016.

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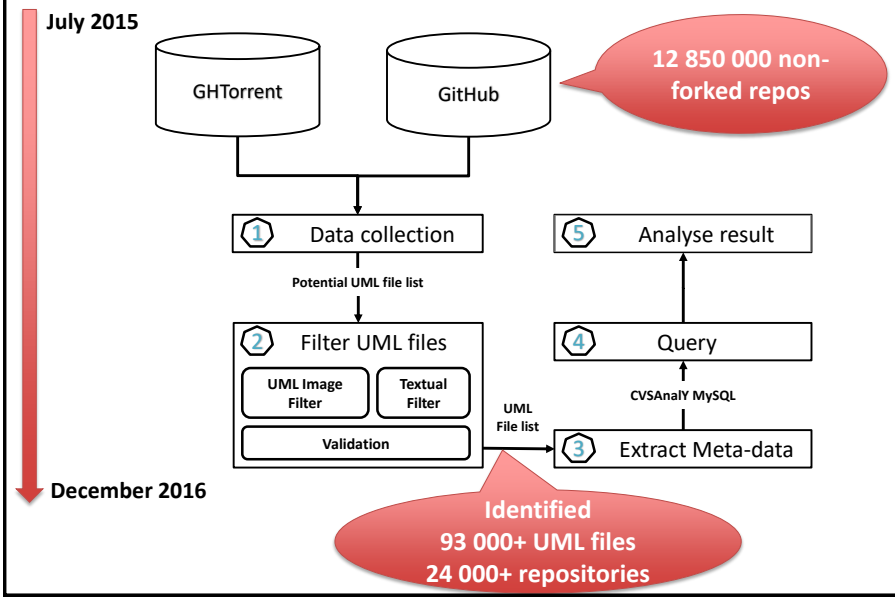
Collecting data

Some statistics



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Collecting data

Surprise 1
UML models appear in many formats

File type	.uml	xmi	svg	png	jpeg	bmp	jpg	gif
Share	34%	4%	1%	37%	<1%	<1%	10%	13%

image formats

60%

NB. We did not *yet* look into: pdf, word, ppt, specific UML-CASE tooling-formats (.uml, .umple, …)

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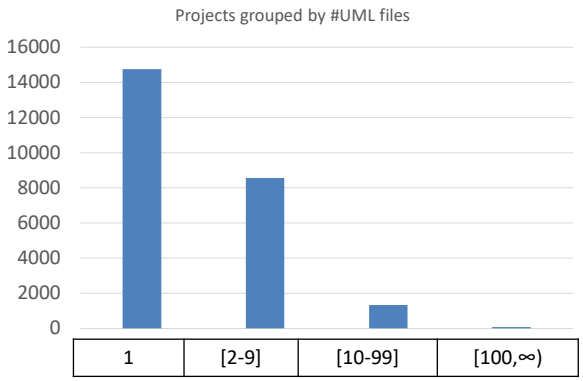
Projects grouped by number of UML files

#UML files	1	[2-9]	[10-99]	[100,∞)
#Repositories	14 749	8 567	1 333	68



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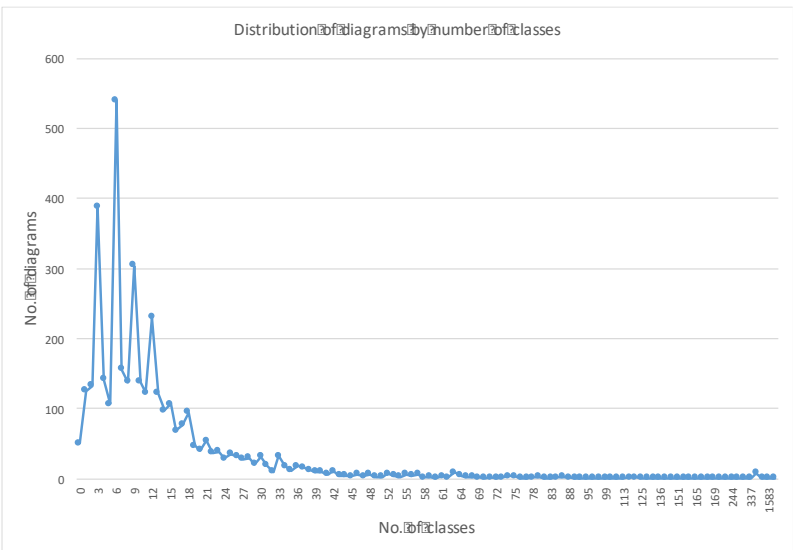
Example analysis: size of class diagrams



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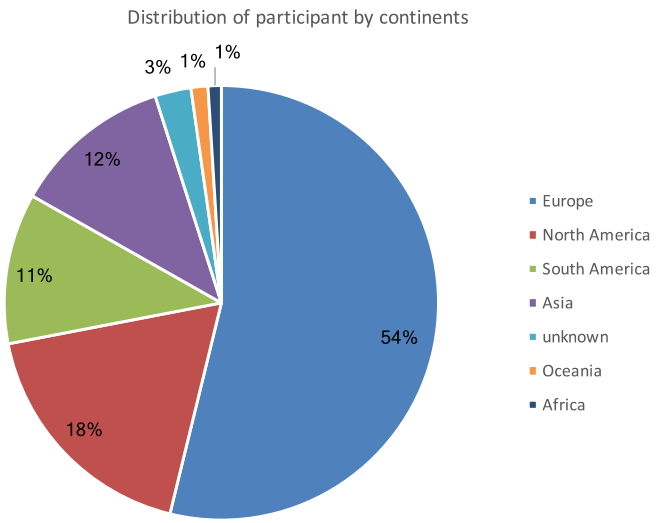
Countries of Projects that use UML



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Opportunity

This dataset enables many types of empirical studies

Are you looking for models?

We have collected http://oss.models-db.com/

35 000+ class diagrams

from 24 000+ open source projects at GitHub

These diagrams can be traced back to the projects, hence it is possible to find associated project data such as source code, commit messages, commit-dates, and much more.

We would love to hear from you:
- Would you like to use the dataset in your research?
- Which research questions do you recommend us to look at?

Hebig, R. & Ho-Quang, T. & Robles, G. & Fernandez, M.A. & Chaudron, M.R.V. (2016). The Quest for Open Source Projects that Use UML: Mining GitHub In proceedings, *ACM/IEEE 19th International Conference on Model Driven Engineering Languages and Systems*, Saint-Malo, France, October 2-7, 2016.

Dataset

http://oss.models-db.com/

Research Group

CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY | UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG | Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Contact person: Truong Ho-Quang
truongh@chalmers.se

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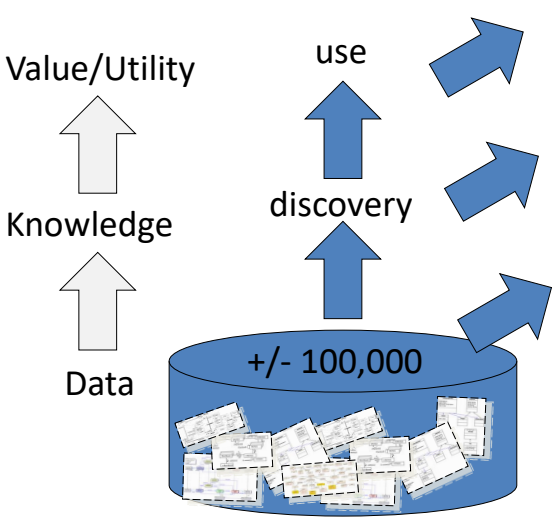
Research Challenge



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Knowledge Discovery Challenge

- Huge variety of data:
  - Graphs: UML diagrams
  - Source code
  - Text: SAD, bug-reports, ….

Currently looking beyond models and code, also into Software Architecture/Design Documents

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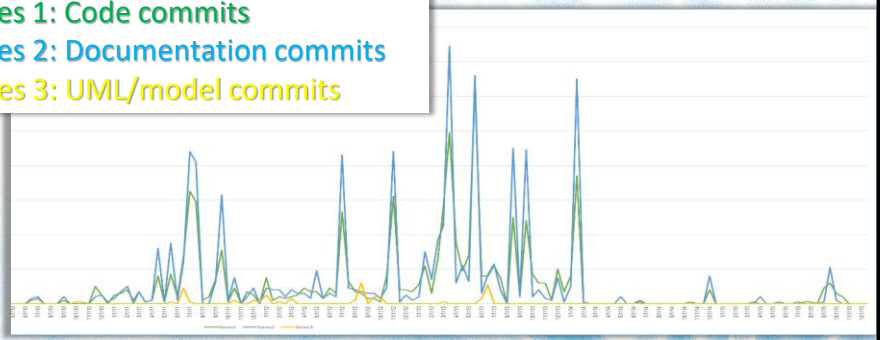
Understanding the Modeling Process

Series 1: Code commits
Series 2: Documentation commits
Series 3: UML/model commits



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Understanding the Modeling Process

Series 1: Code commits
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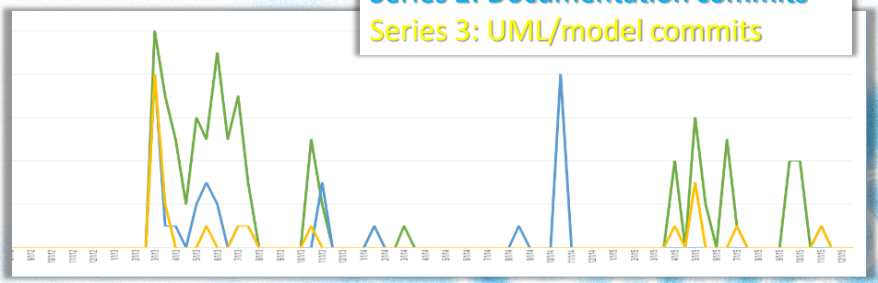
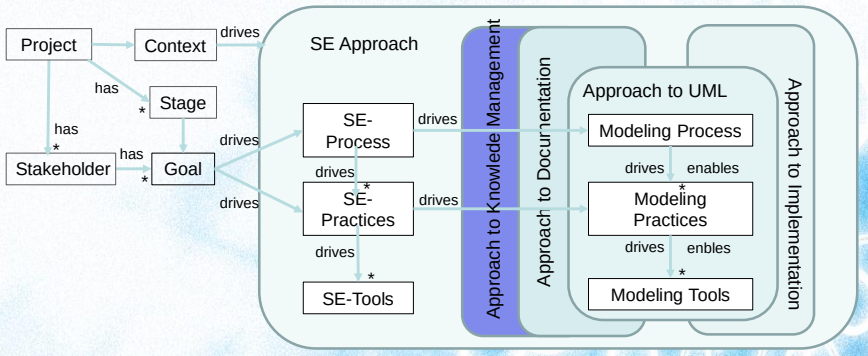


Work in Progress – Some insights so far:
- very little updating of models
- no quality assurance applied to models

Approach to Modeling is contextual



Is there a DNA for Software Design?

"Sequence motifs are short recurring patterns in DNA that are presumed to have biological function."

D'haeseleer, P. *Nature Biotechnology* **24**, 423 - 425 (2006).

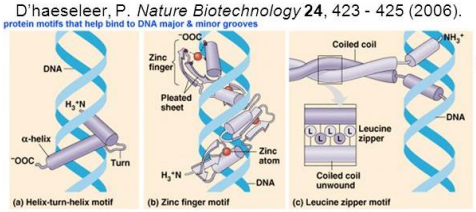


Image taken from bio.miami.edu

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Challenge: Uncovering the hidden structure of designs

Rebecca Wirfs-Brock: Software designs are built from building blocks that have stereotypical responsibility-roles

Controller | Coordinator | Interfacer

Structurer | Service Provider | Information Holder

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Definition of Role Stereotypes

There are many ways to understand the nature of a class, but I start by looking at its name. *Aptronyms* are names that match a person's occupation—Joe Strong is a weight lifter; Suzie Snow is a ski instructor. Because I look at a class's name to suggest its role in a design, I expect class names to be aptronyms. For example, in Java, a StringTokenizer picks apart segments of a string, and the ClassLoader loads classes. But names aren't always illuminating. So I also scan a class for intention-revealing method names that suggest the class's behavior. Of course, the definitive source is always the code, but I shouldn't have to pore over details just to get the gist of a class.

In this column, I introduce several characteristics I ascribe to classes when trying to understand their nature and purpose. I hope you find these useful quiddities and not mere quibbles. (I'm both delighted by and distrustful of a word that has definitions with opposite meanings. The technical term for such a beast is autoantonym.)

Role stereotypes

Purposeful oversimplifications, or *role stereotypes* from Responsibility-Driven Design

- *Information holder*: an object designed to know certain information and provide that information to other objects.
- *Structurer*: an object that maintains relationships between objects and information about those relationships. Complex structurers might pool, collect, and maintain groups of many objects; simpler structurers maintain relationships between a few objects. An example of a generic structurer is a Java HashMap, which relates keys to values.
- *Service provider*: an object that performs specific work and offers services to others on demand.
- *Controller*: an object designed to make decisions and control a complex task.
- *Coordinator*: an object that doesn't make many decisions but, in a rote or mechanical way, delegates work to other objects. The Mediator pattern is one example.
- *Interfacer*: an object that transforms information or requests between distinct parts of a system. The edges of an application contain user-interfacer objects that interact with the user and external interfacer objects, which communicate with external systems. Interfacers also exist between subsystems. The Facade pattern is an example of a class designed to simplify interactions and limit clients' visibility of objects within a subsystem.

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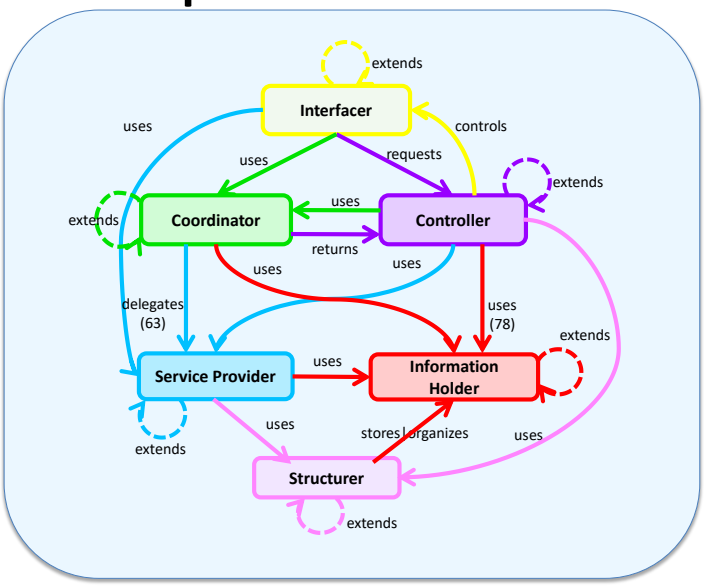
Relationships between role stereotypes



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Automated Classification of Role-Stereotypes by Machine Learning

Arif Nurwidyantoro
Monash University
Melbourne, Australia
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Truong Ho-Quang
Chalmers | Gothenburg University
Gothenburg, Sweden
truongh@chalmers.se

Michel R.V. Chaudron
Chalmers | Gothenburg University
Gothenburg, Sweden
chaudron@chalmers.se

Accepted for publication in EASE2019

- Build a ground truth for 3 open source projects
  - K9, BitCoinWallet, Home3D
- Features used:
  - source code (e.g. names), design metrics, network-metrics

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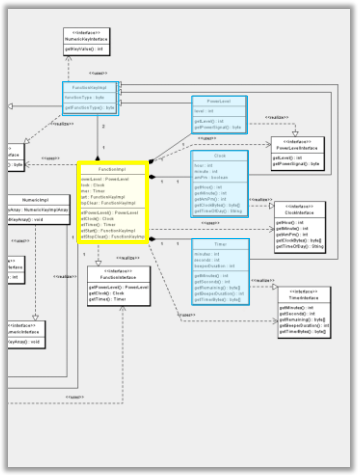
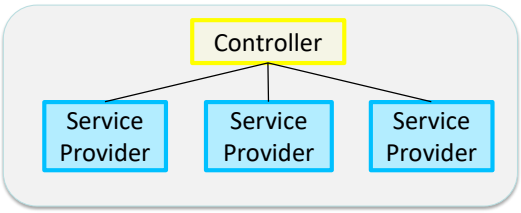
Mining graph-patterns in Software Designs



Through labelling of roles, we find recurring patterns in the design



These patterns represent typical collaborations between responsibility-stereotypes

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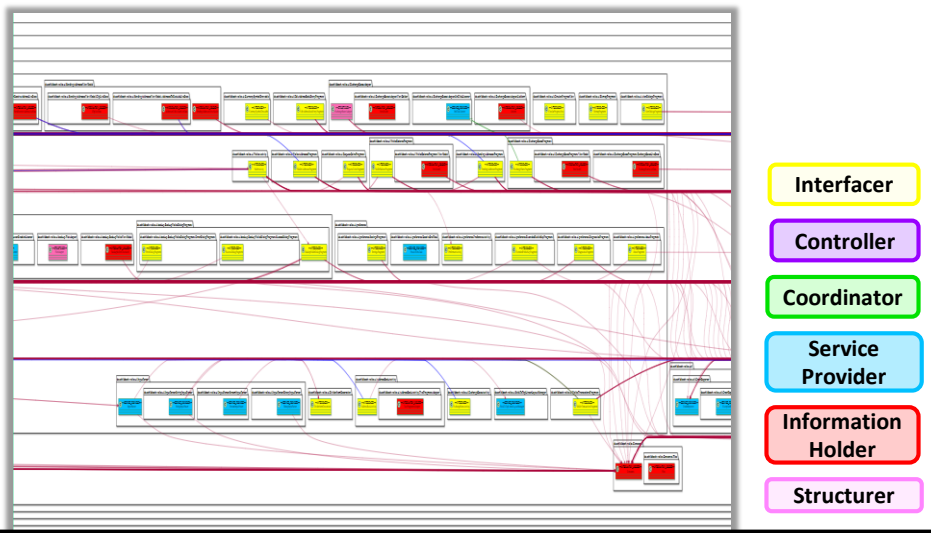
Role-stereotypes in software design



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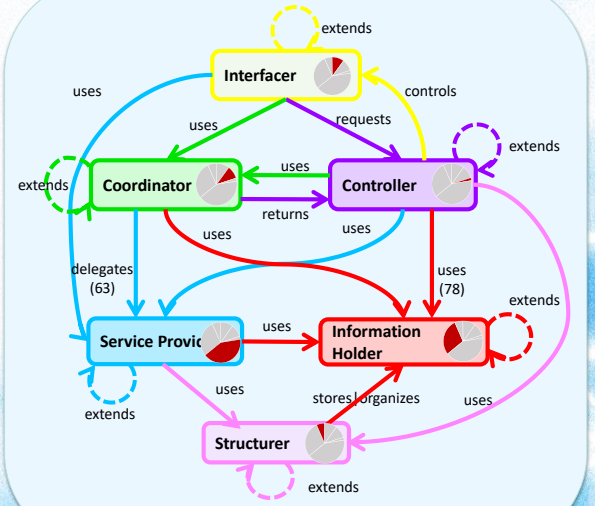
Distribution of Role-Stereotypes



Role	Freq.	%
INTF	77	10
COORD	79	10
CNTRL	20	2
SRVC	323	42
IHLDR	231	30
STRCTR	49	6
	779	

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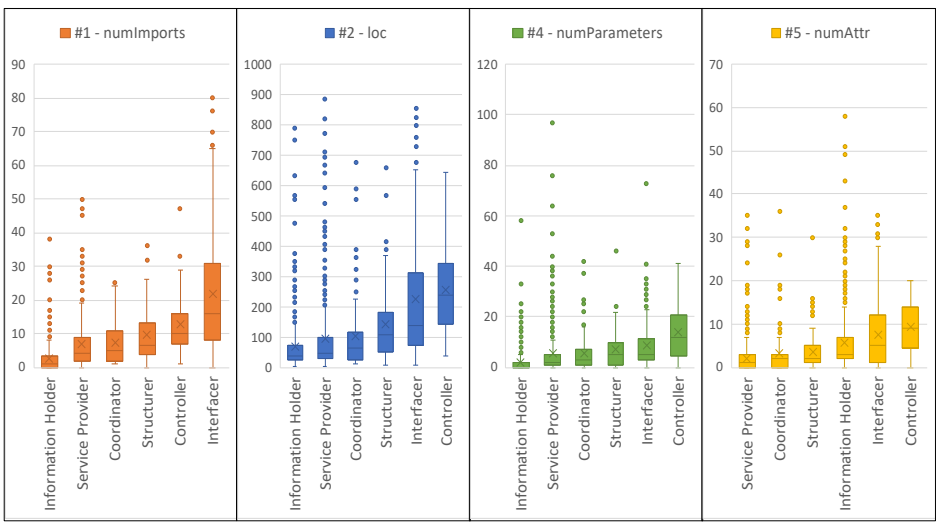
Role-Stereotypes Differ Significantly in their Design Metrics



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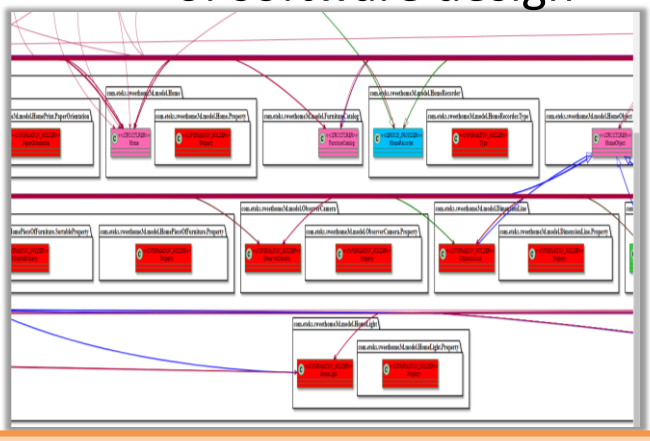
Role-stereotypes-based visualization of software design



Interfacer

Controller

Coordinator

Service Provider

Information Holder

Structurer

Ratio of different role-stereotypes within a component gives information about its main type of responsibility

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Possible uses of Role-Stereotypes

Role-Stereotypes aid in:

- Program understanding
- Design summarization
- QA for Architecture/Design
- Tailoring test-generation/coverage/…

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Challenge: Mining graph-patterns in Software Designs

Challenges:

- Stereotypes are ‘idealized’.
  In practice, classes are not ‘ideal’ designs.

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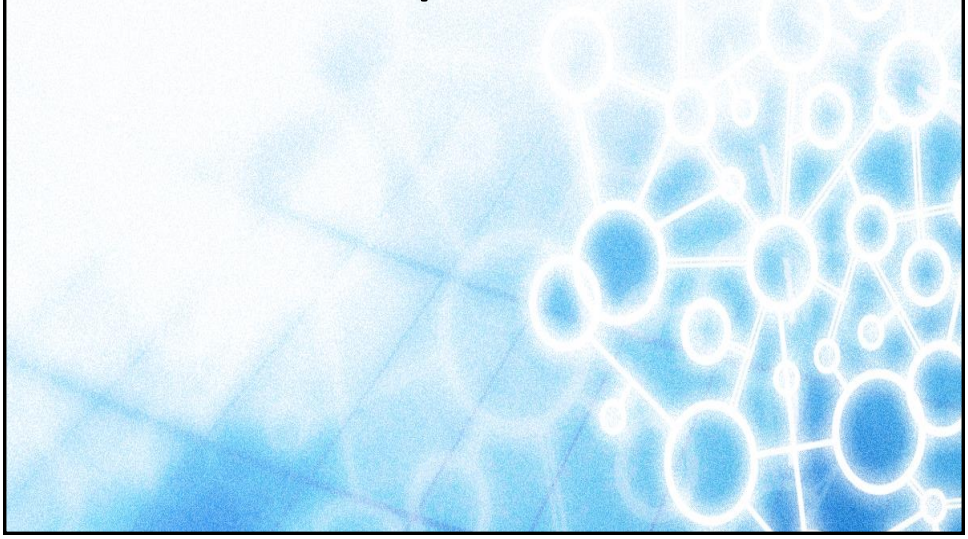
Knowledge Management in Software Development & Maintenance



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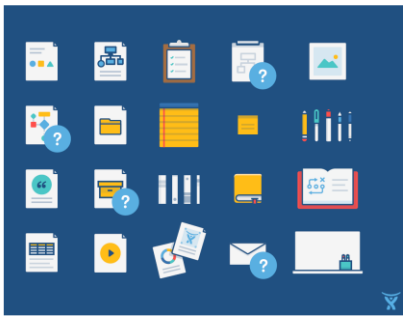
Documentation Challenge: Find & Navigate



- Where is the information that I need?
- Many 'places' *GitHub, Project-PC, …*
- Poor searchability
- Poor navigability
- Is it up-to-date?

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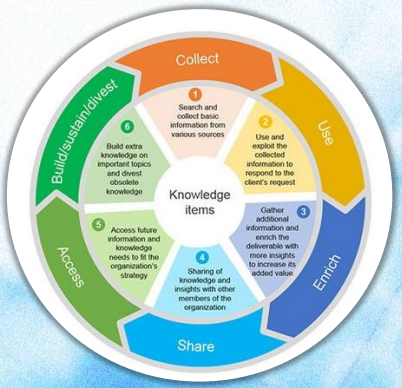
Knowledge Management in Software Development & Maintenance

Reduces load on creating & maintaining documentation



- Extraction
  - NLP, image processing
- Linking
  - ontologies
- Up-dating
- Navigate / Present

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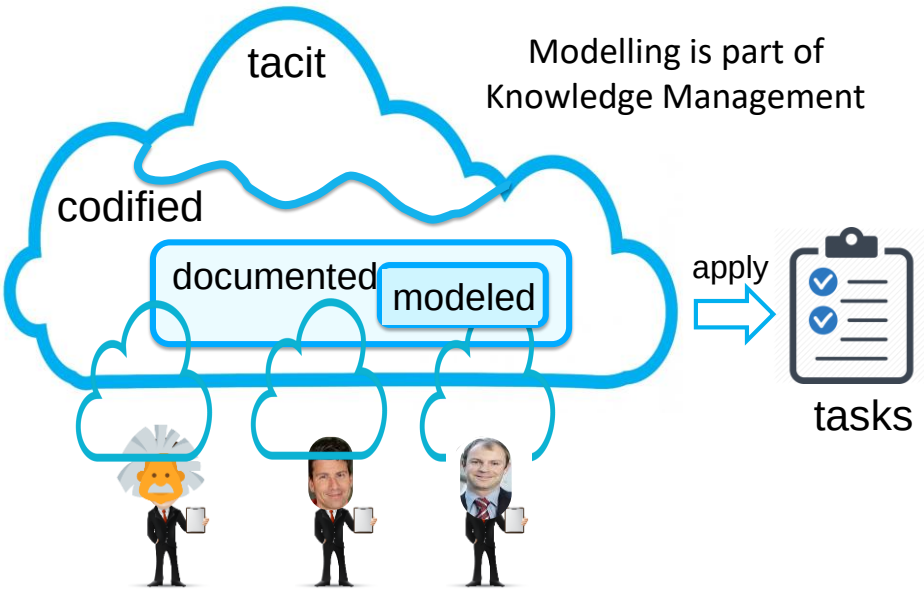
Knowledge Management



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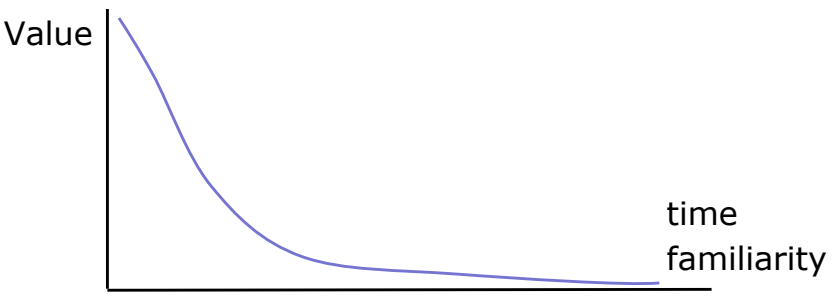
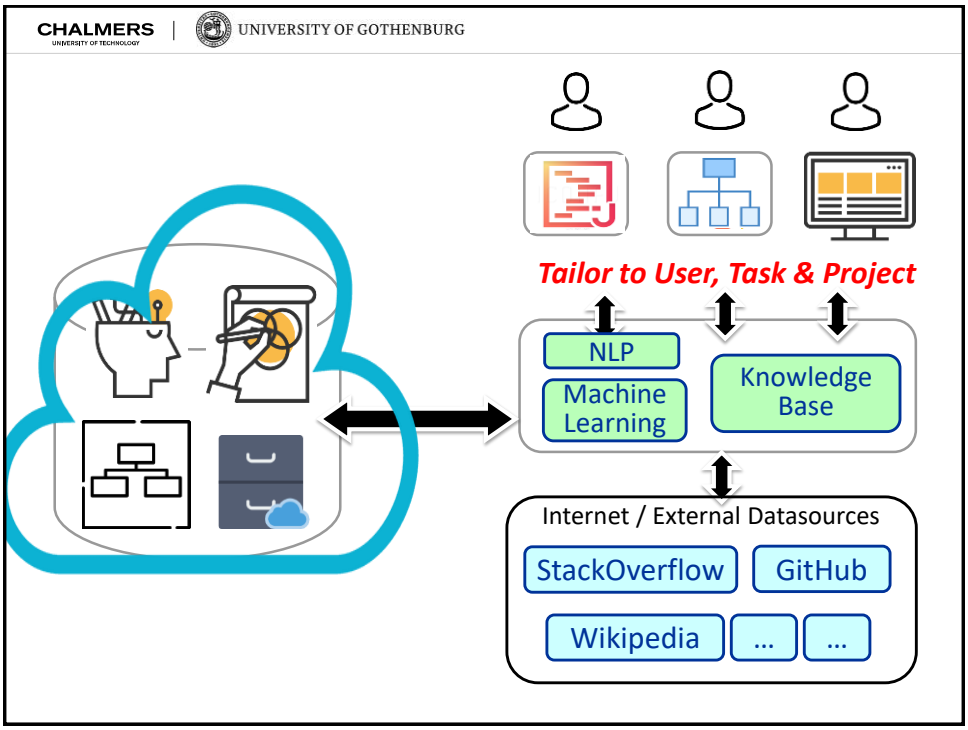
Documentation Paradox

- Value of documentation as a function of time (=familiarity with the system)



Novices need it, but cannot make it.
Experts can make it, but do not need it.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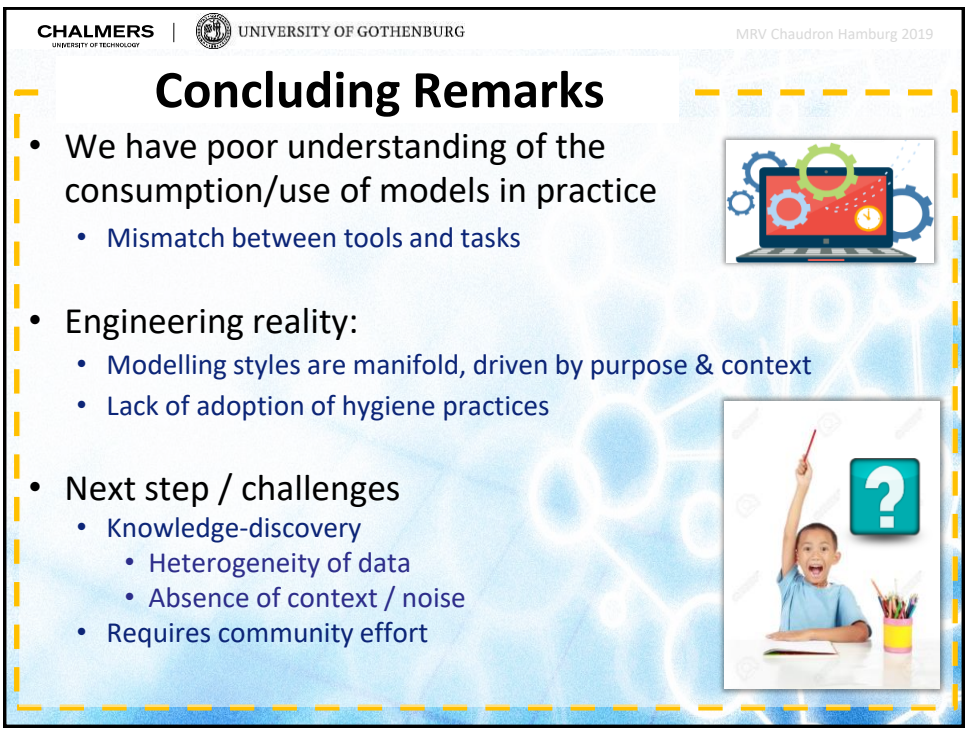
Tailor to User, Task & Project
NLP
Machine Learning
Knowledge Base
Internet / External Datasources
StackOverflow
GitHub
Wikipedia
...
...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Concluding Remarks
• We have poor understanding of the consumption/use of models in practice
• Mismatch between tools and tasks
• Engineering reality:
• Modelling styles are manifold, driven by purpose & context
• Lack of adoption of hygiene practices
• Next step / challenges
• Knowledge-discovery
• Heterogeneity of data
• Absence of context / noise
• Requires community effort

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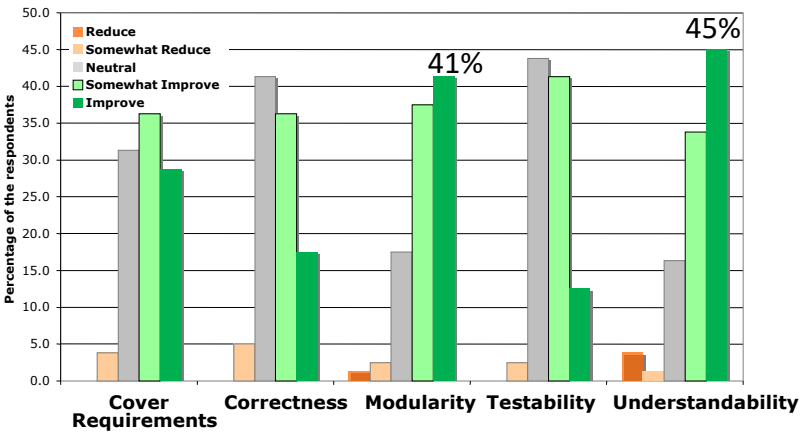
Does the use of modeling improve software quality?



A large number of developers indicated the use of UML improves **understandability** and **modularity**

Ariadi Nugroho, Michel R. V. Chaudron: A Survey of the Practice of Design - Code Correspondence amongst Professional Software Engineers. ESEM 2007: 467-469

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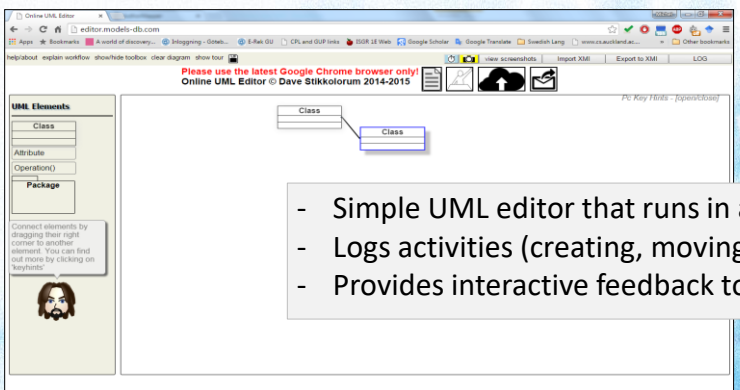
Summary of Evidence on Modeling

Benefit	Status
Communication	Confirmed
Analysis	No evidence
Structuring	No evidence
Guiding	Confirmed

Main hurdles:
- migrating existing documentation
- Integrating modeling tools in toolchain
- Integrating modeling into process
- Keeping models & documentation up to date

Project : Towards an online learning environment for software design

with Dave Stikkolorum



- Simple UML editor that runs in a browser
- Logs activities (creating, moving, renaming)
- Provides interactive feedback to students

Goal is to integrate 'doing design' in online learning courses (UML/Analysis & Design/Softw architecture)

Visualization of log of modeling actvities

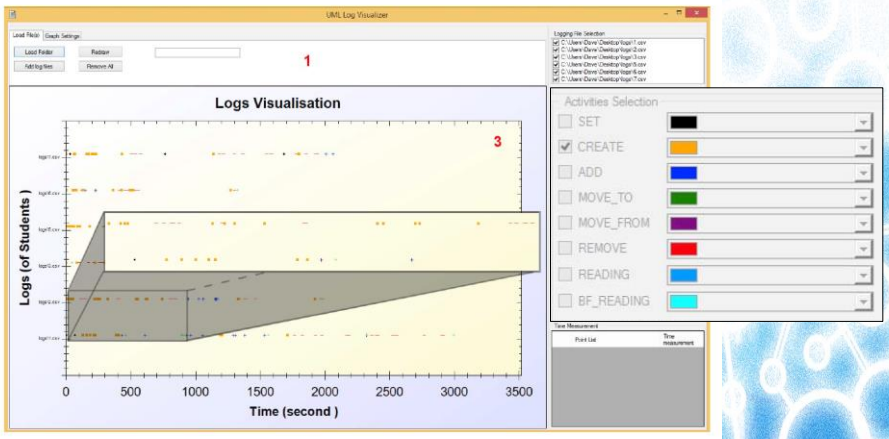


Fig. 2: LogViz visualisation tool

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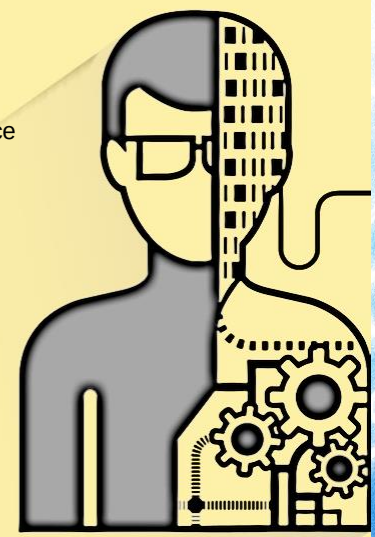
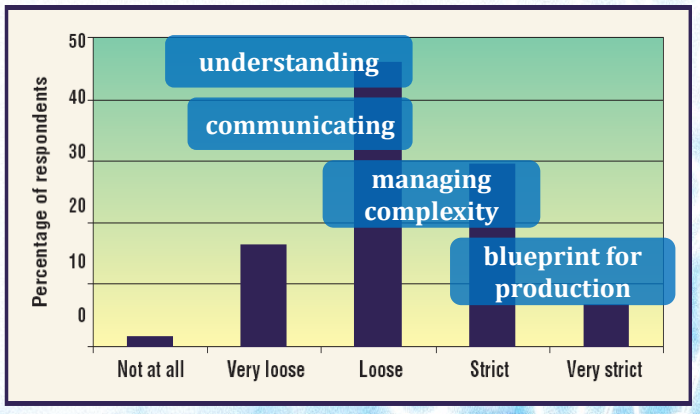
Summary:

AI will augment Human Intelligence in Software Engineering



Modelling style and model purpose



C.F.J.Lange, M.R. V. Chaudron, J.Muskens: In Practice: UML Software Architecture and Design Description. IEEE Software 23(2): 40-46 (2006)

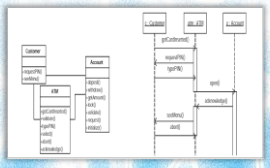
Styles of using UML

- as a sketch – thinking tool/understanding
- for communicating system design
- as a blueprint – guide the implementation work
- as a implementation (MDA) - code generation

Effect of Defects on Understandability of UML

ICSE 2005 paper with Christian Lange

Experiment:
Show participants 2 types of UML models
A. 'good model'
B. model omission / inconsistency



For 'faulty' models, participants more often differ in their interpretation.

Both students & professionals

Lange, Christian FJ, and Michel RV Chaudron. "Effects of defects in UML models: an experimental investigation." In *Proc 28th ICSE*, pp. 401-411. ACM, 2006.

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Challenge 1

Can we automatically assess the quality of a software design?

Crappy design → ? → Good implementation

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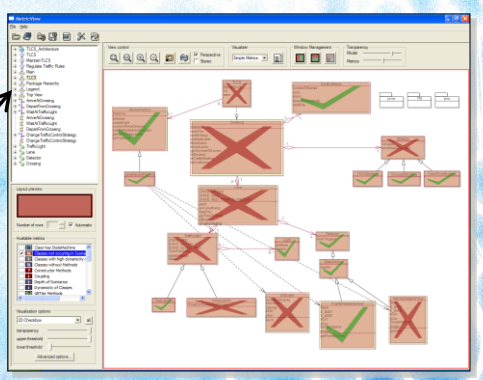
Project: Quality Assessment of Software Design - the MetricView tool

When is a design 'good'?
Absence of 'bad things'?

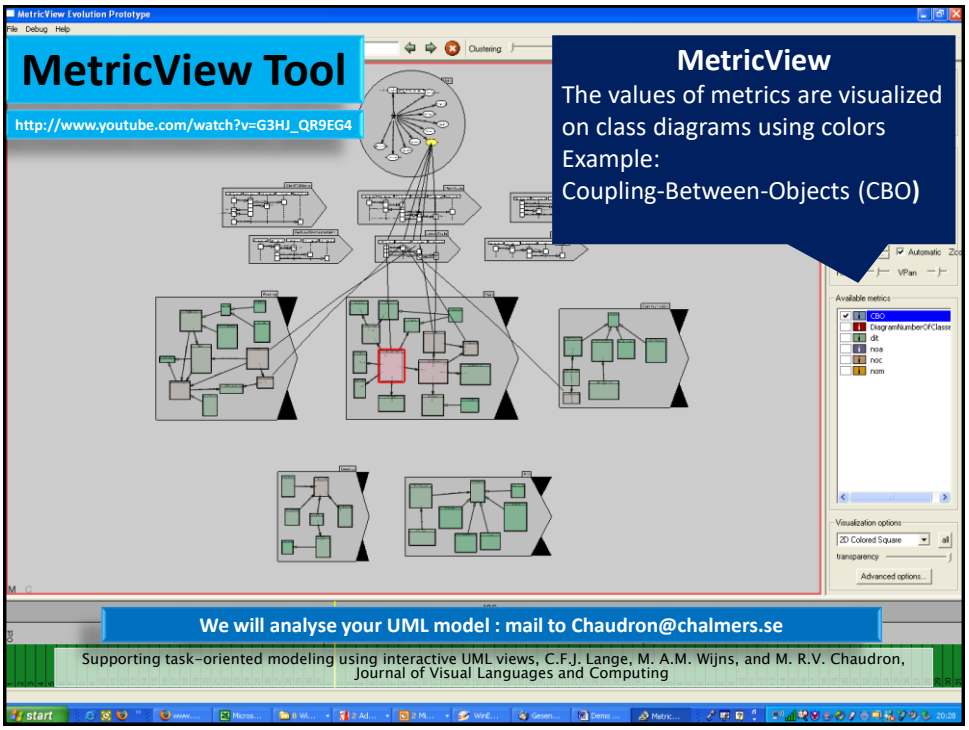
with Christian Lange & Johan Muskens

Quality Metrics capture design principles

- Coupling
- Cohesion
- ... <extensible>



✗ = violation ✓ = ok



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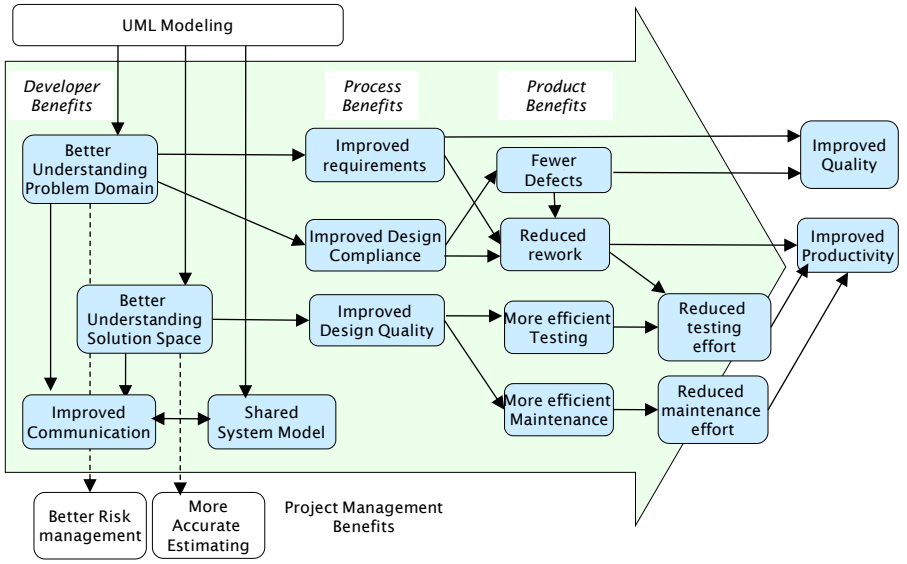
Industrial Experience with MetricView as Quality Assurance Tool

- Based on 15+ industrial projects
- If there are weak spots in the design, then these are indicated as 'suspects' by MetricView
- About 90% of the weak spots indicated by MetricView do not require improvement according to project architects

Syntactic checks (like metrics) are not sufficient to identify important areas in the design!

- The later MetricView is applied, the fewer 'weak spots' are removed from the design → process issue

Theory of Benefits of Modeling



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Integrate Modeling into Process and Tooling

Low Hanging Fruit
(c) Erin Wilson 2010

Naming and layout-conventions

Version Management

Many tools around (e.g. CVS, SVN, …)

Reviews & Inspections

Guidelines by e.g. Shull et.al., Biffl,

Easy QA-tool: SDMetrics http://www.sdmetrics.com/

Process

Integrate into process:

Who? When? How? Update a model in documentation

'Definition of done'

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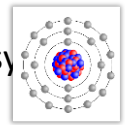
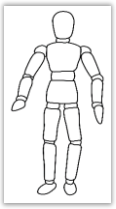
Definitions

Model (noun) = an abstract representation of a thing/sy



often *systematic* representation



Models abstract: they focus on the essential features and leave out others.

Modeling = the process of creating a model

(verb) i.e. choosing what to represent
how to represent it

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Design (verb, noun)

Definition

Design (v) = the process of making decisions about something that is to be built or created**:**

Design (n) = the plans, drawings, etc., that show how something can be made

Pitfall : 'design' & 'model' can be a verb and a noun

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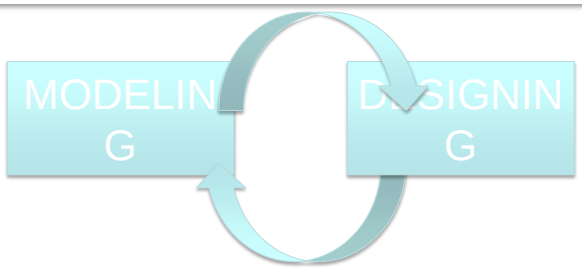
How do ‘modeling’ and ‘design’ relate?

Modeling and designing often go hand-in-hand:

A model is used to understand, reason, analyse, break-down, which leads to adaptation and refinement of the design.



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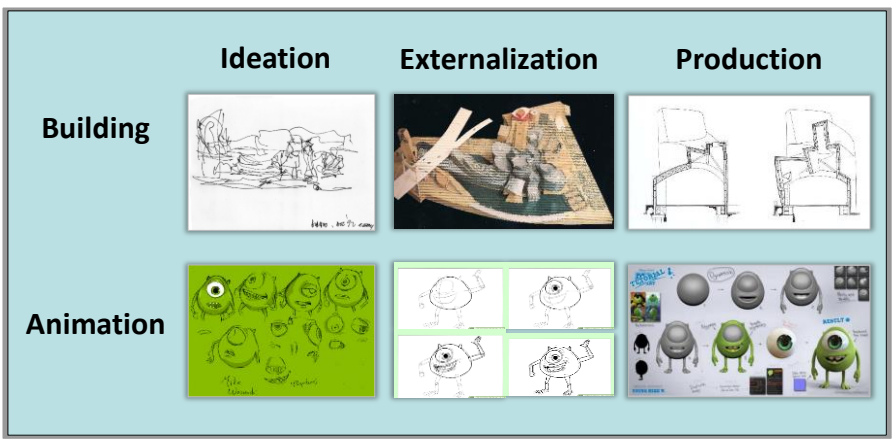
Stages of Design & Modeling



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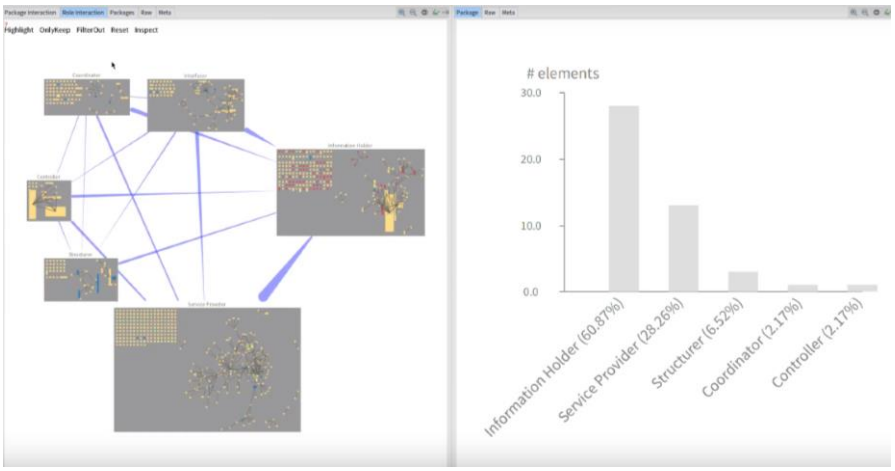
Challenge: Visualisation



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Visualisation Challenge

- Scale
- Multiple uses
- Multiple abstraction levels
  - Models & Source Code

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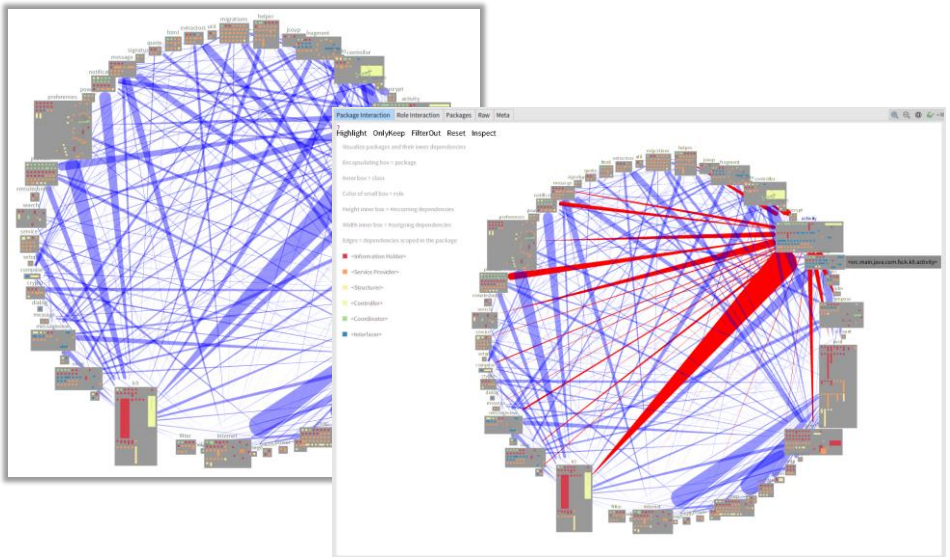
How to layout packages of classes?



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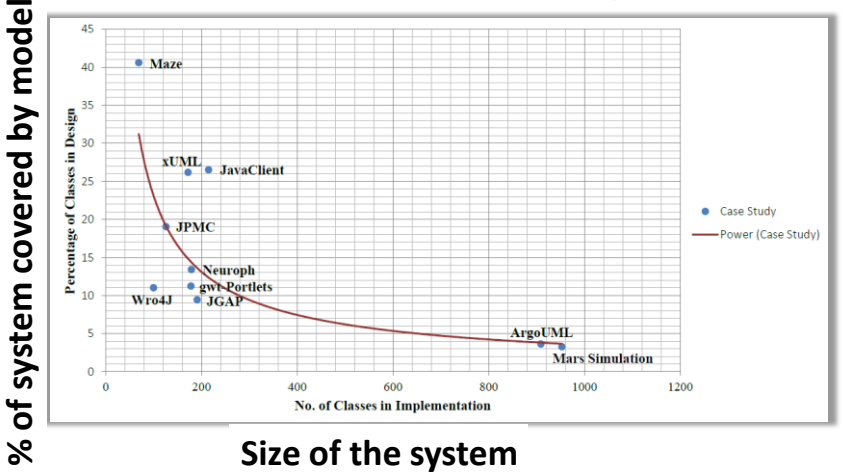
Economy of Modeling



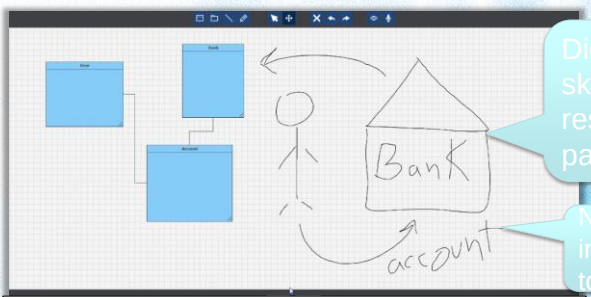
Integration of Tools in Design Flow and Development Process

Are the tools the problem?

Project : OctoUML

with Rodi Jolak

- Merge **whiteboard** (informal, free-form) and **CASE-tool** (formal) modeling



Digital editing for sketching: undo, resize, move, pan, zoom

Novel UI interaction models: touch, voice

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsN3rfEAYHw&t=74s

Goal: Tools should support the ***development process*** (not only the modeling task)

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Challenge

Does the quality of a software design related to the quality of the implemented software?

Good 'more thought truough' design → ? → Good implementation: - Fewer defects?

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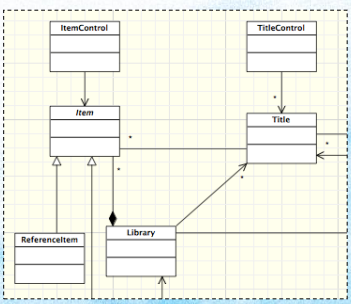
MRV Chaudron Hamburg 2019

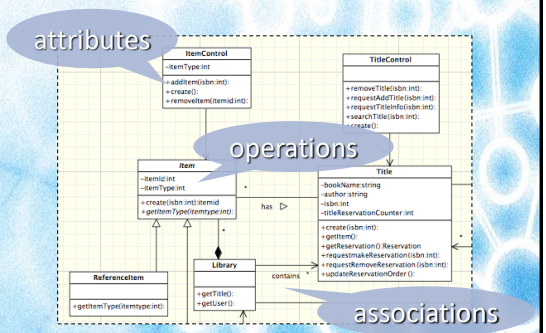
Project: Does Quality of Modeling Matter? An Industrial Case Study

with Ariadi Nugroho

Focus on ***detail*** in a UML Model



Low detail



High detail

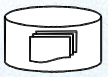
Relation between UML-LoD and Code Quality

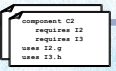
Select 'defects' in defect DB

Find classes in source code that were repaired for solving this defects

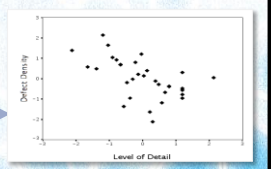
Find corresponding classes in UML models

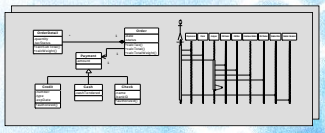
Determine LoD for CD and SD

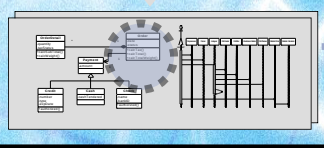




defect density

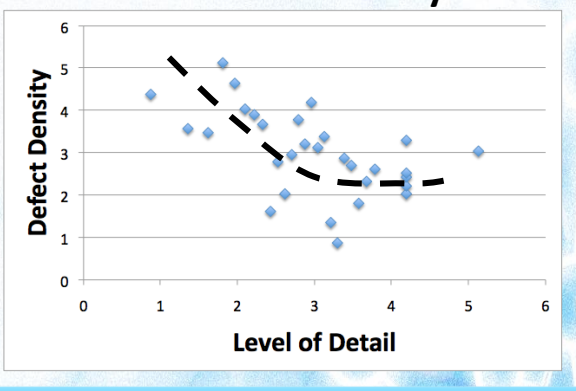






LoD per class

Relation between Level of Detail and Defect Density



Level of Detail for Sequence Diagrams is significantly (negatively) correlated with defect density.
More detailed model => fewer defects

What about class diagrams?